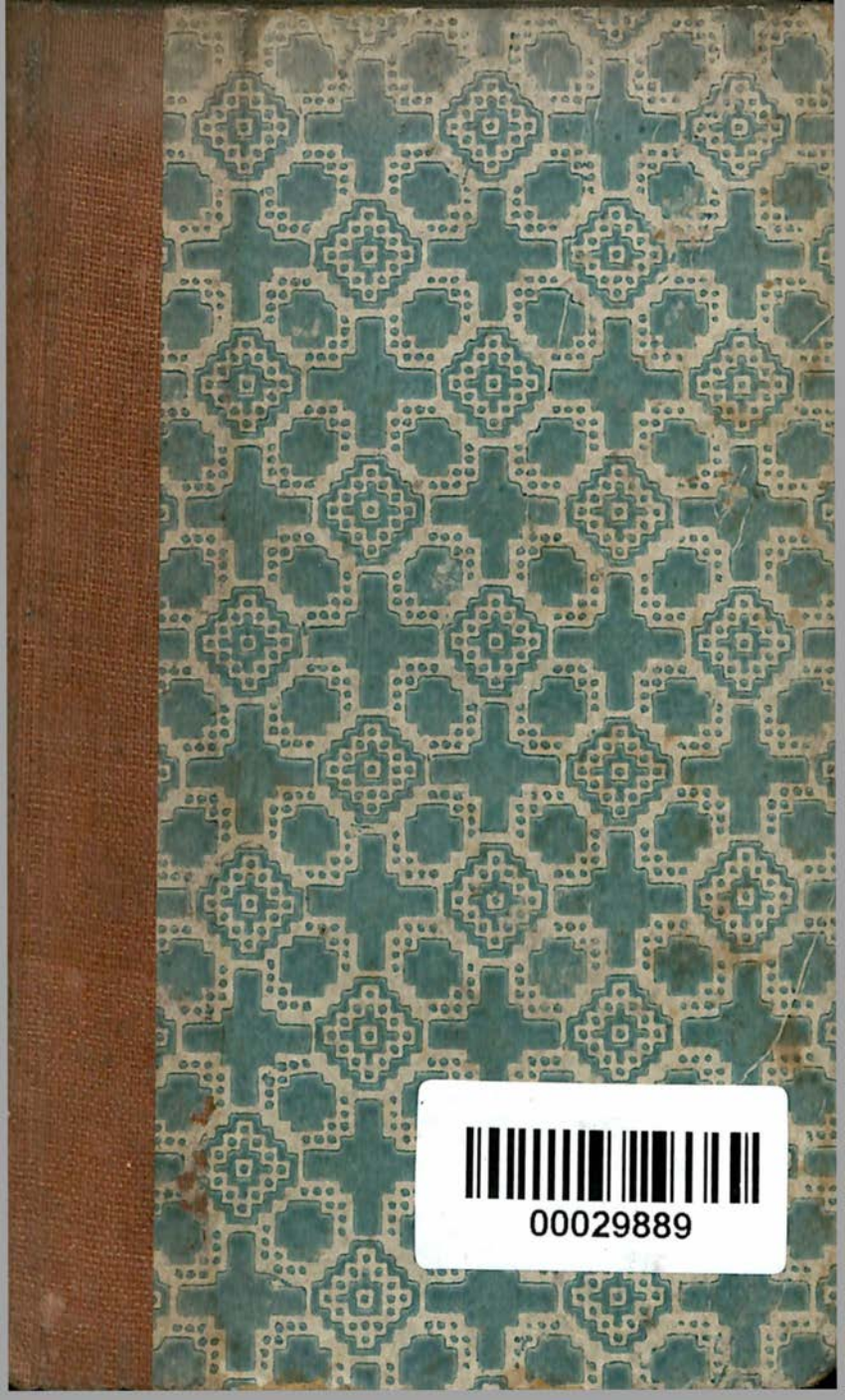
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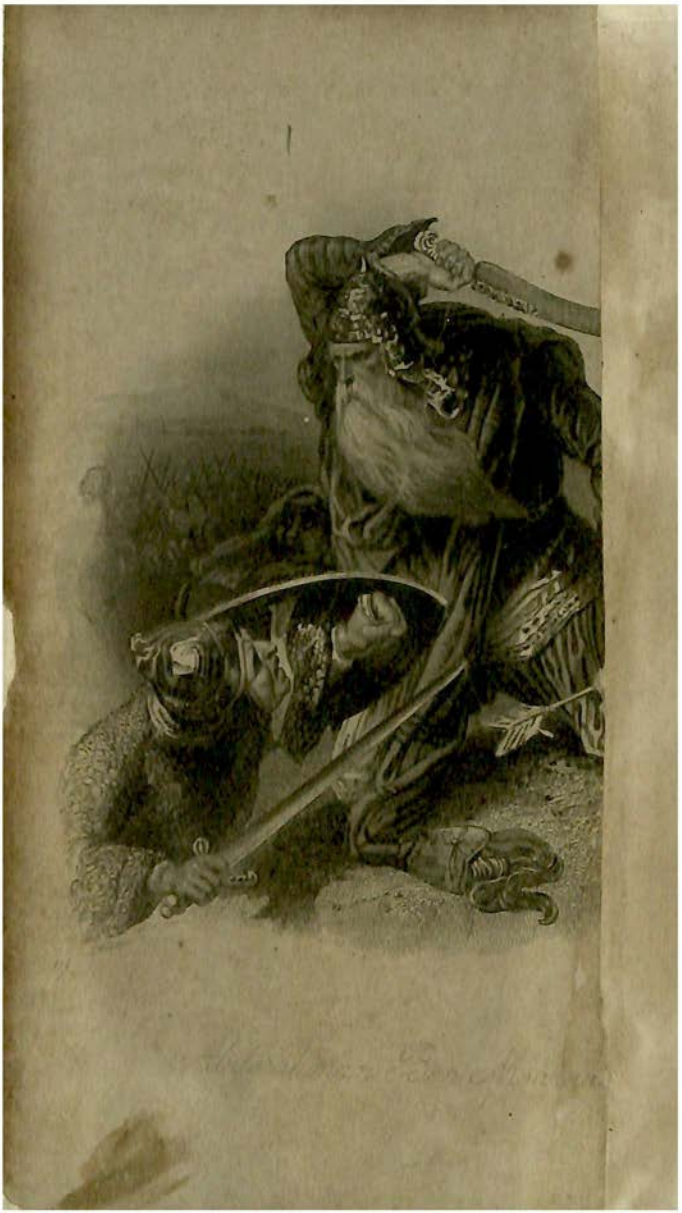

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HISTORY

OF THE

DOMINION OF THE ARABS

IN

SPAIN.

TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH OF

DR. J. A. CONDÉ,

BY

MRS. JONATHAN FOSTER.

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IN THREE VOLUMES.

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PREFACE.

THE work of the celebrated historian Condé, however well known to the student of Spanish literature, has not before been presented to the English reader: a lacuna in our literature which the present translation is intended to supply.

The first volume of the original work was published at Madrid early in 1820, and had the advantage of the Author's superintendence; but before the second could be given to the public, death had removed him from the scene of his labours, and deprived the world of one of its most distinguished literary ornaments.

Three years after the appearance of the concluding volume (1821), a German translation was made by Herr Karl Kutschmann, Captain in the service of the Grand Duke of Baden, which, though not exhibiting the learning and research so often brought by the Germans to the elucidation of their text, is very faithfully performed.

A French translation, or rather rifacimento of the work, by M. de Marles, was published, Paris, 1825, but so transposed, and otherwise altered, as scarcely to be recognisable. Indeed, M. de Marles requests that his work may neither be called a translation nor a servile imitation, but "a complete History," founded on Condé's materials, and com-

pleted from other sources. All that is valuable, however, in the book belongs to Condé, including much of what, by transposition, is assumed to be new; while the matter added from other sources is irrelevant, or taken from printed works, such as Ferreras, Garibay, &c., which were quite as accessible to Condé as to M. de Marles, had he deemed them of value.

On the admirable manner in which the learned and conscientious Author completed his work, it is not necessary here to dilate. He frequently allows the Arabian writers to speak for themselves, and with so felicitous an effect, that the reader may almost hear the voices of the speakers, conducting him to the land of the patriarchs. He has by this means imparted infinite life and vigour to his story, many parts of which are more exciting, in the stern realities of their mournful interest, than the most successful inventions of romance; while the manner of their narration is not unfrequently invested with great beauty, dignity, and melody of diction.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER		PAGE
Translator's Preface		iii

PART I.

I.	Of the Ancient Arabs	30
II.	Of the Commencement of Islam	33
III.	Of the Military Expeditions of the First Caliphs against the Greeks and Persians	35
IV.	Entrance of the Arabs into Africa, and Conquest of the Cyrenaica	39
V.	Conquest of Barbary and Foundation of Cairvan	40
VI.	Conquests of Muza in Almagreb, or Mauritania	47
VII.	Empire of the Caliph Walid Ben Abdelmelic	48
VIII.	Proposal for passing into Spain, and attempts for effecting that purpose	51
IX.	Entrance of Taric Ben Zeyad into Spain	53
X.	Of the Battle of Guadalete	56
XI.	Of the Arrival of Muza Ben Noseir in Spain, and the Conquests of Taric Ben Zeyad in Andalusia	60
XII.	Of the Conquest of Medina Toledo and its Comarcas	64
XIII.	Of the Conquest of Merida and Arrival of Abdelaziz Ben Muza in Spain	65
XIV.	Of the Arrival of Muza Ben Noseir in Medina Toledo, and of the Discords of the Generals, Taric and Muza	71
XV.	Of the Conquests of Abdelaziz Ben Muza in Murcia	73
XVI.	Of the Conquests of Taric in Eastern Spain and of Muza Ben Noseir in the North	78
XVII.	Of the Departure of Muza and of Taric for Damascus	81
XVIII.	Of the Empire of the Caliph Suleiman	85

CHAPTER

XIX. Of the Death of Abdelaziz Ben Muza, and the Government of his Cousin Ayoub 87

XX. Of the Reign of the Caliph Omar Ben Abdelaziz, and the Government of Alhaur Ben Abderahman El Caisi in Spain 91

XXI. Of the Reign of the Caliph Jezid Ben Abdelmelic, and the Government of Alsama Ben Melic El Chulani 93

XXII. Of the Reign of the Caliph Hixem, and of the Government of Abderahman and of Ambisa Ben Sohim El Kelbi in Spain. 98

XXIII. Of the Elections and Depositions of various Ameers of Spain 102

XXIV. Of the Government of Abderahman Ben Abdallah and Death of Otman Ben Abi Neza . . 10[illegible]

XXV. Of the Expedition of Abderahman to the Gauls . 1[illegible]

XXVI. Of the Election of Abdelmelic Ben Cotan as Ameer of Spain 112

XXVII. Of the Government of Ocba Ben Alhegag . . 114

XXVIII. Of the Return of Ocba Ben Alhegag to Spain, and of his Death 118

XXIX. Of the Rebellion of the Barbary Tribes in Africa, and of the Arrival of Baleg Ben Baxir in Andalusia 119

XXX. Of the Civil War in Spain between Baleg Ben Baxir and Abdelmelic Aben Cotan . . . 12[illegible]

XXXI. Of the Reign of the Caliphs Walid Ben Jezid and Jezid Ben Walid 127

XXXII. Of the Revolt in Africa and of its Leader, Hantala Ben Sefuan 128

XXXIII. Of the Government of Husam Ben Dhirar, Ameer of Spain . . . . . 1[illegible]

XXXIV. Of the Reign of Caliph Ibrahim, and of the Civil War in Syria 134

XXXV. Of the Civil War between the Generals Samail Ben Hatim Thueba Ben Salema and Husam Ben Dhirar 136

XXXVI. Government of Thueba Ben Salema and Election of Jusuf Ben Dhirar El Fehri 140

XXXVII. Government of Jusuf El Fehri and Division of the Provinces of Spain 143

CHAPTER PAGE
XXXVIII. Of the Reign of the Caliph Meruan, last of the Omeyas in the East 146
XXXIX. Of Tragic Events relating to the Beni Omeyas . 151
XL. Of the Civil War between the Arab Generals in Spain 154

PART II.

I. Of Abderahman Ben Moavia, and his Wanderings among the Arabs of the Desert . . 163
II. Of the Council of the Xeques or Chiefs of Syria and Egypt, established in Spain . . . 166
III. Of the Embassy of the Xeques to Abderahman Ben Moavia 168
IV. Of the End of the War against Alabdari . . 170
V. Of the Arrival of Abderahman Ben Moavia in Spain 173
VI. Of the War against Jusuf El Fehri and Samail Ben Hatim 174
VII. Of the Subjugation and Surrender of Cordova . 177
VIII. Of the Continuation of the War and the Treaty made with Jusuf El Fehri 179
IX. Of the Entrance of the King Abderahman Ben Moavia into Merida, and of the Birth of Hixem . 181
X. Of the Insurrection and Death of Jusuf El Fehri . 185
XI. Of the Tribute imposed on the People of Castile, and of the Entrance of Abderahman Ben Moavia into Medina Toledo 186
XII. Of the Movements of Barcerah and of the Son of Jusuf El Fehri 189
XIII. Of the Imprisonment and Death of Samail Ben Hatim 190
XIV. Of the Insurrection of Hixem Ben Adra in Medina Toledo 193
XV. Of the Arrival of the Wali of Cairvan, and his March against the King Abderahman Ben Moavia . 194
XVI. Of the Revolt of the Alcayde of Sidonia . . 198
XVII. Of the Arrival of El Meknesi and his March against the King Abderahman Ben Moavia . . 200

CHAPTER PAGE

XVIII. Of the Expedition to Gallicia, and the War against El Meknesi and Sekelebi . . . 202

XIX. Of the Entrance of El Meknesi into Seville, and of his Death 206

XX. Of the Revolt of Huseim El Abdarim Zaragoza, and of the Education of the Sons of the King, Abderahman Ben Moavia 212

XXI. Of the Flight of Muhamad Abulaswad, Son of Jusuf El Fehri, from his Prison in Cordova . . 215

XXII. Of the War against Muhamad Abulaswad, with his Adventures and Death 218

XXXIII. Of the Campaign of Abderahman in Lusitania and Gallicia 221

XXIV. Of the Construction of the Great Mosque in Cordova, of the Oath of Allegiance taken to Prince Hixem, and of the Death of the King Abderahman Ben Moavia 223

XXV. Of King Hixem Ben Abderahman and of his Dissensions with his Brothers, Suleiman and Abdallah 226

XXVI. Of the Battle of Bulche and the Subjugation of the Princes, Suleiman and Abdallah . . 230

XXVII. Of the Rebellion and War in Eastern Spain . 234

XXVIII. Of the Works of King Hixem Ben Abderahman . 236

XXIX. Of the Oath of Allegiance taken to Prince Alhakem Ben Hixem, and of the Death of King Hixem Ben Abderahman 239

XXX. Of the King Alhakem Ben Hixem, of the Discord excited by his Uncles, and of the Victories obtained in Eastern Spain 242

XXXI. Of the New Victories of Alhakem Ben Hixem, of the Death of Prince Suleiman, and of the Treaty made with Prince Abdallah Ben Abderahman 245

XXXII. Of the Incursions made on Eastern Spain by the People of Afranc 248

XXXIII. Of the Vengeance taken by the Wali Amru in Medina Toledo, and of the Revolt of Merida . 251

XXXIV. Of the Movements in Afranc, the Treaty with Gallicia, and the Conspiracy in Cordova . . 254

CHAPTER PAGE
XXXV. Of the War against the Christians on the Frontiers 256
XXXVI. Of the Oath of Allegiance taken to Prince Abderahman Ben Alhakem, and of the Battle of the Suburbs of Cordova 259
XXXVII. Of the War on the Frontiers, of the Naval War, and the Death of King Alhakem Ben Hixem . 264
XXXVIII. Of the Reign of Abderahman Ben Alhakem, and of the Revolt of his Uncle, Abdallah Ben Abderahman 267
XXXIX. Of the March of King Abderahman Ben Alhakem on Barcelona 270
XL. Of the Campaign on the Frontiers and of the Education of the Princes, Sons of King Abderahman 272
XLI. Of various Events occurring in different parts of the Empire, and of the Insurrection of Medina Merida 277
XLII. Of the Seditions in Medina Toledo . . . 282
XLIII. Of the Entrance of the Rebels into Merida . 285
XLIV. Of the War on the Frontiers, and of the Sea Fight near Marsella (Marseilles) . . . 288
XLV. Of the Descent made by the Normans, Northmen, or Danes on the Coasts of Spain . . . 289
XLVI. Of the various works performed by King Abderahman Ben Alhakem and of his Death . . 291
XLVII. Of the Reign of Muhamad, son of Abderahman Ben Alhakem 293
XLVIII. Of the War on the Frontiers of Gallicia, and in Medina Toledo 295
XLIX. Of the Arrival of the Megioges on the Coasts of Spain 299
L. Of the War in Gallicia, and of the Origin of the Rebel Omar Hafsun Ben Arius . . 301
LI. Of the Perfidy of Omar Hafsun Ben Arius . . 304
LII. Of the Entrance of Prince Almondhir Ben Muhamad into Rotalyehud 306
LIII. Of the Campaigns in Gallicia and the Mountains . 308
LIV. Of the Entrance of Prince Almondhir Ben Mohamad into Zaragoza, and that of the King Muhamad Ben Abderahman into Toledo . . . 311

CHAPTER PAGE

LV. Of New Irruptions into Gallicia, and of other Events 314
LVI. Of the Alliance of the Rebel, Omar Hafsun Ben Arius, with Afranc, and of the Battle of Aybar 318
LVII. Of the Declaration of Almondhir Ben Muhamad as Successor to the Throne, and of the Death of King Muhamad 320
LVIII. Of the Reign of King Almondhir, son of Muhamad 323
LIX. Of the Death of King Almondhir Ben Mohamad in Battle 330
LX. Of the Reign of Abdallah, son of Muhamad . 332
LXI. Of the War of the Princes and of the Rebel Omar Hafsun Ben Arius 334
LXII. Of the Continuation of the Civil War . . 337
LXIII. Of the Victory obtained by Prince 'Abderahman Almudafar, son of the King Abdallah Ben Muhamad, and the Imprisonment of the Princes, Mohamad and Alcasim 344
LXIV. Of the Entrance of the Rebels into Gallicia, and the Battle of Zamora 348
LXV. Of the Treaty made with the King of Gallicia and other Events 350
LXVI. Of the Retirement of the Wali Abu Othman, and of other Events in Cordova 357
LXVII. Of the Education of Prince Abderahman Ben Muhamad, and of the Death of the King, his Grandfather 361
LXVIII. Of King Abderahman Ben Muhamad, called Anasir Ledinallah and Abulmotaraf 364
LXIX. Of the Campaign made by King Abderahman Ben Muhamad in the South of Spain . . 369
LXX. Of the Measures taken by the King Abderahman for guarding the Coasts 371
LXXI. Of the King's Visits to his Cities of Murcia, Valencia, and Saragossa 372
LXXII. Of the Campaigns made by King Abderahman and his Generals in the Mountains of Elvira . 376
LXXIII. Of the Surrender of Medina Toledo . . 383
LXXIV. Of the Affairs of Magreb, or Mauritania, and the State of the Beni Edris in the Kingdom of Fez 388
LXXV. Of the State of the Beni Aglab in Africa . . 395

CHAPTER PAGE

LXXVI. Of the Xiycis Kings, who appeared in Africa at the end of this Century 407
LXXVII. Of the Auxiliary War in Almagreb 411
LXXVIII. Of the Irruptions on the Christians of Gallicia . 416
LXXIX. Of the Foundation of Medina Azahra . . 417
LXXX. Of the Campaign in Gallicia, and of the Battle of Alhandic 422
LXXXI. Of the King's Return to Cordova, and of other Events 428
LXXXII. Of the Battle of Gormaz, and of the Treaties with the Christians made by King Abderahman Anasir 431
LXXXIII. Of the Conspiracy of Abdallah, son of the King Abderahman Anasir Ledinallah . .
LXXXIV. Of the Arrival of Envoys from Greece, and of other Events 441
LXXXV. Of the Capture of an African Ship, and of other Events 446
LXXXVI. Of the Arrival of Abu Alayxi in Spain . . 450
LXXXVII. Of various Works performed by King Abderahman Anasir Ledinallah, and of his Death . . 454
LXXXVIII. Of the Reign of King Alhakem Ben Abderahman Anasir 457
LXXXIX. Of the Departure of the King Alhakem to the Frontiers of Gallicia . . . 462
XC. Of various Events, and of Arrangements made by King Alhakem Ben Abderahman . . 466
XCI. Of New Wars in Almagreb, or Mauritania . 470
XCII. Of the Arrival of the Ameer of Africa at Cordova, and of other Events 475
XCIII. Of the Oath of Allegiance taken to Prince Hixem Ben Alhakem, and of the Sages of Andalusia 481
XCIV. Of certain Circumstances in the Government of the King Alhakem Ben Abderahman, and of his Death 487
XCV. Of the Reign of Hixem Ben Alhakem, called El Muzad Billah 493
XCVI. Of the first Campaigns made by the Hagib Almanzor 497
XCVII. Of the Campaigns of Muhamad Almanzor in Gallicia 503

Series of the ARAB SOVEREIGNS *of* SPAIN *reigning in* CORDOVA.

	Year of the Hegira.
Abderahman I. died	171
Hixem I. died	180
Alhakem I.	206
Abderahman II.	238
Muhamad I.	273
Almondhir	275
Abdallah	300
Abderahman III.	350
Alhakem II.	366
Hixem II. imprisoned	399
Mohamad II.	400
Suleiman Almostain	400
Hixem II. restored	403
Suleiman Almostain restored	407
Aly Ben Hamud	408
Abderahman IV.	412
Alcasim Ben Hamud	413
Yahye Ben Aly expelled	413
Abderahman V.	414
Muhamad III.	415
Yahye Ben Aly restored	417
Hixem III. deposed	422

Gehwar Ben Muhamad Ben Gehwar;
Muhamad IV., Ben Gehwar Abdelwalid.

These two last Kings of Cordova belong to the Third Part of the History, and are not mentioned in the text of the First or Second Part.

CHRISTIAN KINGS *of* SPAIN, *and other* PRINCES, *mentioned in the Second Part of this work.*

CHAPTER

XXIV. King Anfus.*

XXXVI. Armelos, son of Constantine, King of Greece.

XXXIX. King of Greece.

XLIV. Alanfus,† King of Gallicia.

Theophilus, King of the Greeks.

LVI. King Garcia.

LXV. Alfonso III., the Great.

LXXVIII. King Radmir.

LXXXII. Radmir of Gallicia.

LXXXIV. King of the Greeks.

XCVIII. Borel, King of Afranc.‡

C. Garcia Ben Sancho.

Bermond, King of Gallicia.

CV. Count Sancho, King of the Christians.

Count Bermond.

Count Armengudi.

* Alfonso. † Alfonso. ‡ France.

PREFACE OF THE AUTHOR.

A SORT of fatality, attaching itself to human affairs, would seem to command that in the relation of historical events those of the highest importance should descend to posterity only through the justly suspected channels of narrations written by the conquering parties. The mutation of empires, the most momentous revolutions, and the overthrow of the most renowned dynasties, seem all to be liable to this disadvantage: it was by the Romans that the history of their own aggrandizement was written; the narration of their rivalry and sanguinary wars with the Carthaginians has come down to us from themselves; or if Greek writers have also treated the subject, these men were the tributaries and dependents of Rome,—nor did they spare the flatteries best calculated to conciliate her favour.

Scipio thus appears to us the most admirable of heroes, but is not that in part because the history of his life is the work of his admirers and flatterers? It is true that the noble and illustrious Hannibal cannot look otherwise than great and glorious even in the narratives of his mortal enemies; but if the implacable hatred and aggressive policy of Rome had not commanded the destruction of all the Punic annals, the renowned African general would doubtless appear to us under an aspect differing much from that presented by the ruthless barbarian, described by Livy and accepted by his readers as the portrait of Hannibal. The celebrated warrior, our Cid Ruy Diaz, does not make the same figure in the works of Arabian writers as in the narratives of our own chroniclers: in the latter, humane

as valiant, he is described as receiving and protecting the fallen Gafo, whom he carries out of the press and beyond the reach of danger on his own shoulders; while in the Arabian annals, perfidious as cruel, he is represented as burning alive the Governor of Valencia, although that general had laid down his arms, or as violating all his promises and trampling the most sacred compacts beneath his feet.

But a sound and just discrimination forbids us to content ourselves with the testimony of one side only; this requires that we compare the relations of both parties with careful impartiality, and commands us to cite them with no other purpose than that of discovering the truth.

It is with these convictions, and in the spirit of these demands, that I devote myself to the task of describing the Domination of the Arabs in Spain, compiling it from Arabian memorials and writings in such sort that those documents may be read as they were written, and that all may see how their authors have themselves related the events of that memorable epoch.

And here I may with truth affirm that to this my work I have given all the study and care of which I am capable; I have refused no kind of labour, have taken pains to overcome all the difficulties presenting themselves, and have sedulously availed myself of every facility and assistance that could be obtained. Nor have my utmost care and persistence been more than sufficient for the purpose, since it was no light labour fully to ascertain and clearly to describe the first origin of the great nation whose deeds are here in question, placing all events in their due order of time; neither was it an easy task to make manifest the course of its progress, to relate its vast conquests and important actions, to depict its customs and manners, with the degree of cultivation to which it gradually attained; or, at a word, to set forth in simplicity and sincerity the various and complicated changes occurring in the long series of 800 years. To arrange events thus numerous and diversified, gathering them from conflicting authorities, and comparing the relations of all, to arrive at a fair amount of certitude amidst the discordance of chroniclers and historians, and to gain the true point of view where so much uncertainty prevailed, was a painful and arduous labour, more especially

when we add to this that all these things were next to be translated from the Arabian into our Castilian tongue, and that it was not from written books, correct and legible, and whence the information they may comprise is to be readily obtained, that the facts were to be derived, but from ancient and often much injured manuscripts. Yet, without the endurance of the fatigue consequent on this state of things, it was not possible to place events in their true order, nor could the circumstances be related as they occurred, without the light cast upon them by the Arabian authorities here laid before the reader.

During ages when the most profound ignorance reigned in Europe, and when the higher orders of the clergy alone were there capable of reading, the Arabians, those of the East as well as of Africa and Spain, had already acquired much learning: this truth was well known to the king, Don Alfonso the Wise, and was early acknowledged by that monarch, when, in the year 1254, he commanded the establishment of schools in Seville, and made the Latin and Arabic a portion of the studies to be pursued therein. To this great sovereign we owe many valuable translations from Arabian works, but these were for the most part astronomical treatises, written according to the taste of that age, with some few on the sciences of Medicine and Chemistry: the period influenced by Alphonso was followed, moreover, by unhappy times of ignorance, during which all better things were disregarded; the Arabian learning was then no more held in esteem, nor until the restoration of letters in Europe did any man think of gathering its precious remains.

It may be safely inferred that the libraries of Spain must have been more especially rich in the best MSS. of this language, since they had not only ample opportunity for procuring such at the time of the Conquest of Granada, but had further more occasions for increasing those stores at Tunis, as well as by the occupation of Oran, Ceuta, and other cities of Africa. But in those days the name and literature of the Arabians were alike objects of contempt, and the singularly erroneous opinion of the period, according to which every Arabian writing was held to be the Koran or Book of Mussulman errors and superstitions, caused all to be condemned without examination; thus,

thousands of volumes were cast into the fire and consumed, notwithstanding all the efforts of the Moors to conceal and transport them into Africa before the destroyers could lay hands on those treasures.

Leo Africanus informs us that he had himself dwelt in Algiers, in the house of a Commissioner of that city, by whom no less than 3000 books belonging to the Moors of Granada had been saved from destruction; and although these losses were to some extent repaired in the reign of Philip III., by the capture of a ship wherein was found the library as well as wardrobe of Muley Zidan, Prince of Morocco, yet the fatality by which letters are persecuted did so mightily prevail, that in the year 1671, a conflagration broke forth in the Escurial, by which were consumed more than 8,000 volumes, the greater portion of them Arabian. This was an irremediable loss, since it is well known that, after the expulsion of the Arabs from Spain, their literature constantly degenerated; nay, it has continued to do so, until they have at length arrived at the deplorable ignorance into which are now sunk, not those of Africa only, but of the Orient also: their only good and valuable works are those of old times, but the copies of these books are not now multiplied as in the days when learning flourished among the Arabians, and the originals are unhappily perishing.

It is true that the library of the Escurial, notwithstanding the calamities which it has suffered, still retains magnificent remains of its former greatness: but the most valuable and important works have been more or less injured and are incomplete. Nor is this loss likely to be for the present repaired, seeing that there is now a total absence of all the attention and care required to promote the study of Arabian literature, useful and even needful as it is for the illustration of our history and geography, while the knowledge of that literature is absolutely indispensable to a correct appreciation of the genius of our own language, and throws light on the origin of many among its richest and most elegant forms of speech. Unhappily the opportunities which have presented themselves for obtaining Arabian MSS. have not at any time been turned to account, although many rich treasures might frequently have been procured, in those parts of Africa where they now lie for-

gotten, together with the works of our own Andalusian writers, also conveyed thither, where all are now perishing, disregarded and unappreciated by their barbarous possessors. On this point we have certainly been far from equalling the learned men of Holland, France, and England, who have been careful to bring from the East and from Africa whatever MSS. they could procure,—thus increasing their literary wealth by an addition which now forms one of the principal ornaments of their Libraries.

But without insisting further on this subject, it is certain that for my purpose the consultation of such memorials as have been left to us by the Arabic writers was indispensable. The little we yet know of the extended dominion exercised by that nation on the soil of Spain, is taken from the superficial notices of our ancient Spanish chroniclers; but these writers are not only disfigured by the extreme rudeness of their style, as well as by their excessive brevity and lamentable inexactitude, but have also been so much injured by time as rarely to have reached us until reduced to a condition which leaves them deplorably incomplete. Even in things relating to ourselves they are frequently obscure, while the little they contain respecting the Arabs is deformed by every kind of confusion and misrepresentation. We have also to remember that their relations are the doubtful narratives of enemies writing at a time when the hatred existing on both sides was at its utmost intensity of violence; when no other communication but the terrible and sanguinary shock of arms was held between the conflicting parties, and when, in the ever-detested domination of the Arabs, our writers beheld, and could behold, nothing more than the abhorred preponderance of its tyrants.

Thence it is that we find so many false, misrepresented, or at the least imperfectly developed relations, contaminating and obscuring our history in this highly important part; and thence arises the belief most commonly entertained that the Moors, when they entered Spain, arrived in hordes innumerable,—not as brave and fortunate warriors, but as fierce, cruel barbarians, without culture and without order; a mere troop of savages, delivering all things to fire and the sword, pitiless and inhuman to both sexes and every age, destroying

whatever they found in their path, and leaving no one stone upon another in the hapless towns they subdued. At a word that Christianity fled in dismay before the aspect of these Barbarians, and that they left no traces behind them but those of horror, desolation, and death.

These opinions, the consequence of that terror to which the rapid and overwhelming conquests of the Arabs in Persia, Syria, Egypt, Africa, and Spain, with the excesses of their sanguinary irruptions into Gaul, had given birth, were rendered firm convictions by traditions current in those dark and barbarous times, and were constantly perpetuated by the repetition of those fables. Much more clearly, and, indeed, as they truly occurred, are those events related in the ancient writings of the Arabs themselves: whence we discover with certainty in what manner it was that an army of fanatical warriors entered Andalusia, passed over and totally ravaged the ill-guarded fields of Lusitania, and, defeating a numerous army of badly prepared Goths, quickly subjugated the whole dominion of Spain.

But the conditions imposed on the conquered nation were such that the people found consolation rather than oppression in the presence of the conquerors; and when they compared their then fate with that which they had previously endured, could not fail to consider the change a fortunate one. The free exercise of their religion, a careful preservation of their churches from all injury, the security of their persons, with the unimpeded enjoyment of their goods and possessions,—such were the first returns which they received for their submission to the stranger, and for the tribute (a very moderate one) which they paid to their victors. But there was yet more: the fidelity of the Arabs in maintaining their promises, the equal-handed justice which they administered to all classes, without distinction of any kind, secured them the confidence of the people in general, as well as of those who held closer intercourse with them: and not only in these particulars, but also in generosity of mind, and in amenity of manner, and in the hospitality of their customs, the Arabians were distinguished above all other people of those times.

And now, since history is the practical teacher of man, it is certain that we are bound carefully to respect the truth in her pages, and to refrain from disfiguring them by falsehoods

and calumnies. Impartiality is the first requisite of the historian; for without this quality what faith can his relations merit? It is not my wish to depreciate the worth or utility of such works as have preceded this which I now publish: I propose only to show that, as respects the period of the Arab rule, those we have hitherto obtained do not afford us much assistance.

The Chronicle of Isidore of Beja, known as the sole contemporary record respecting the arrival of the Arabs, and their first conquests in Spain, is all that we now possess in that kind. This Chronicle is, moreover, of closely limited extent, it embraces but a short period of time* and abounds in errors. The names of the first Emirs who commanded the Arabian forces on their entrance into Spain, form the principal part of the information it affords, and even these are rarely given correctly, nor does the list of them extend beyond the 7th year of Jusef el Fehri's command, the year of our Lord 754, that is to say: it is true that if the other works, which this apparently industrious writer declares himself to have produced, had not unhappily been lost, the history of that calamitous period might not have remained quite so obscure as this fragment leaves it; yet in the little which he has said, although the manner is not so rude and untaught as that of his successors, he proves himself nevertheless to be sufficiently inexact, and is, besides, much too declamatory in style for the calm relation of historical events: the exaggerations of Isidore of Beja are, moreover, manifest; and he presents few clear ideas respecting the policy and government of the Arab conquerors.

Those who followed Isidore of Beja, though they copied his work, yet did so with but little exactitude; and in what they added of their own times they displayed even less care and diligence than himself, while they are still more concise, more impassioned, and more uncultivated than he. Among these writers, the best known and most accredited are Sebastian, called of Salamanca, to whom is attributed the Chronicle which descends to the year of Christ 886; and the Monk Vigila, who added the Chronicle of Abeldum,† which comes down to the year 973: to this succeeds the Chronicle

* A period of forty-four years only.—TRANSLATOR.

† Cronicon Abeldense.

of Sampiro the Asturian, who continues his relation to the year 982; after which there follows that by Pelagius of Oviedo, which closes with the year 1109.

In all these works we find but very slight notices of matters concerning the Arabs; a short allusion to some battle, for example, or to the breaking of a truce, with the incorrectly-given name of some leader,—but all dark, obscure, and insufficient. Nor let any one hope here to obtain the true series of the Mosleman sovereigns,—to say nothing of their government and manners, no trace of which he will discover in these writers.

The Annals of Complutum* come down to the year 1119, those of Compostella to 1248, and the Toledan Chronicle to 1290; but all are exceedingly rude, repulsively dry, and so concise that they merit no better name than mere notices, giving intimation of the year and day when some battle was fought, or when some other event of like character took place. The most important are dismissed with two words: the battle, for example, which the Arabs call that of Zalaca, from the name of the place, near Badajoz, where it was fought—a most important and sanguinary conflict, in which our King, Alfonso the Sixth, contended with the whole assembled might of all the Arabian chiefs and rulers in Spain, reinforced by such aids as were sent to them by the Almoravidan Moors, whose auxiliaries had arrived from Africa to their assistance: this battle, I say, is described in the following words:—"*In Era* 1124, *Die* 6, 10 *Kal. Novembris, die SS. Servandi et Germani, fuit illa arrancada in Baduzo, id est Sacralias, et fuit ruptus Rex Domnus Adefonsus.*" So far the Compluternian Annals. Those of Compostella say,—"*Era* 1124, *fuit illa die Badajoz;* while the Toledan have the account as thus,—"In 1124 the Moors did utterly defeat the King Don Alonso at Zagalla."

From these Chronicles, and from certain Arabic writers, Don Rui Ximenes, Archbishop of Toledo, compiled his History of the Arabs, the first intelligible account which Europe had received of that renowned Eastern people, and which was written in Latin. This learned prelate lived among the Muzarabians,† by whom the Arabic tongue was

* Or of Alcalà de Henares.

† This name was long given to the inhabitants of Toledo, who, after

commonly used; and the Archbishop spoke it as familiarly as his own. But although the work of Don Rui Ximenes is of considerable merit, it does not exhibit sufficient precision and clearness as to the Arabic Dynasties of Spain, nor does it extend beyond the year of the Hegira 539, or that of Christ 1140. Neither did this writer correctly compute the years of the Christian era, as compared with the lunar years of the Arabian calendar,—an error which has led many of the writers on our History into serious mistakes; among other defects in dates of importance is that which places the entrance of the Arabs into Spain in the year 713, while the battle of Xeres has in like manner been described as fought in Nov. 714.

The History called that of the Moor Rasis or Razif, and which is believed to have been translated from the Arabic by Maestro Muhamed and Gil Perez, a priest, at the command of the King, Don Donis, or Dionisius, of Portugal, is but a wretched compilation from the barbarous old chronicles before alluded to, with some few notices taken from Arabian works of no authority. Full of errors and ridiculous fables, this book yet merits some little consideration for the geographical details contained therein, seeing that these, although very defective, do nevertheless supply a certain amount of information on that subject: for the rest it has no value: incorrect as to matter, rude in manner, and barbarous in style, it gives little more than the names of some few Kings of Cordova. Of a reign of fifty years, renowned as was that of Abderrahman the Third, for example, this book records merely that "He reigned fifty years, was very fortunate in his actions, left sons and daughters, and was chosen King by command of Amirabomelin." Of this dry and inexact account, moreover, they do not give more than to the period of the son of that Abderrahman, or to the year of the Arabic computation, 366.

Under the name and authority of the historian Iza Ben

that city had capitulated to the Arabs in the year 711,—or, as other computations make it, 714, and even 752,—lived in perfect harmony with their Mussulman conquerors; nor did any difference on the subject of their respective creeds ever arise between them. Authors differ as to the exact derivation of the word Muzarabian: but into the details of their opinions we do not here enter.—TRANSLATOR.

Ahmed Razif, who certainly wrote a history of Spain cited by numerous Arabic authors, not a few fabulous narratives have become incorporated with the Castilian Chronicles.

The work entitled the Chronicle General is without doubt full of excellent matter; it abounds in very noble descriptions, and highly admirable thoughts; in my opinion it is by much the most elegant and refined of all that can be found in the Spanish tongue relating to those times; but it has, nevertheless, many absurd fables respecting the Jews and Moors; and although the wise King Don Alfonso affirms that he had caused this book to be composed after having gathered all the ancient writings and all the chronicles, all the histories in Latin, and those in Hebrew and in the Arabic, which had previously been lost and lay in forgetfulness, yet the matter was but little ameliorated by all that care, nor was the history of our Arabs rendered materially clearer or better known by those labours.

The same result and no better was obtained in respect to those chronicles of particular places, which were compiled in the time of Don Alfonso the Eleventh; nor can we say more of the works referring to a later period, wherein there is, besides, but little which does not concern our own monarchs. The information respecting the Moors to be found in these works amounts in fact to nothing of any moment.

All the succeeding historians, even the best and most learned, have failed to amend this part of our history—a circumstance which has doubtless arisen from their want of acquaintance with Arabian literature, without which it was impossible for them to do anything more than copy the little which had been related by older writers, and offer conjectures of their own; which is no better than groping in darkness. The absurd fables published under the title of a Translation of the History of Tarif Aben Taric, by the Morisco, Miguel de Luna, does not merit even the most cursory mention, seeing that the impudent assumption of that pretender did but serve to prove his profound ignorance of the subject which he presumed to handle, and to set forth the extent of his literary dishonesty.

Yet what I have said here is not intended unduly to exalt the Arabic writers, any more than to depreciate those

of our own nation: I desire only to establish the truth, and, seeking earnestly to be rigidly impartial, will now give my opinion with equal frankness as to the merits of the former, as I have just done respecting the latter.

The Arabs have always had writers in great numbers, and in this respect have never been exceeded by the most highly cultivated nations, ancient or modern; but if, after their best times, and when they confined themselves principally to mere love songs, poems, adventures of various kinds, and deeds of arms (until they betook themselves to the study of the physical sciences, and translated all the useful works written on that subject in Greece),—if, I say, they had at that period devoted their leisure with equal energy to the reading and translation of the Greek and Latin histories, they might have ended by imitating the excellent example set them by both those nations; and at this moment, instead of absurd and puerile biographers, dry annalists, and ridiculous narrators of tradition, pompous of manner, and immoderately ornate in style, the world might have been enriched by the labours of good historians, since the Arabians yield to no people of the earth, whether in genius or the graces of language.

Hadgi Chalfa enumerates more than 1200 historians in his "Biblioteca, or Library of the East;" but the greater part of these writers are mere abbreviators of, or compilers from, some ten or twelve principal authors; and as even these were not altogether free from errors, the moderns, wanting critical knowledge, and unacquainted with the laws, manners, and customs of ancient nations, have copied these faults without consideration; possessing much less learning than their authorities, and having less inclination than they to treat of national antiquities. They have thus propagated an amount of fable which gives much cause for doubt, and creates infinite confusion among the critics of later times.

Some of the Arab authors—as for example Aben Ishak Tabari, Aben Omar El Wakedi, El Mesaudi, Seif Alezdi, Aben Kelbi, Novairi, and others, treat of many Nations in their various Histories, as well as of different Epochs. Others confine themselves to one particular people and to a given period; while others, again, restrict their labours to matters

concerning their own country and contemporaries. Thus Aben Regig or Rechic limits his work to the history of Africa ; and Aben Hayan, the best historian of Spanish affairs, also contents himself with that subject, or more especially with the rule of the Omeyan sovereigns in Cordova. The numerous writers who have followed those above-named have done nothing better than copy their works, each after his own manner, appropriating the notices supplied by the older authors with more or less judgment and critical acumen: nay, not a few among them, yielding to an excessive desire for the marvellous, and unable to content themselves with the repetition of ancient events as they found them, have presented the accounts of the more authentic historian, enriched with circumstances of their own invention; thus filling what should be History with the deformities of fiction. Some of these writers have even carried this mania to such excess as to misstate the purport and corrupt the relation of events of which they were themselves eye-witnesses, and in which they were to a certain degree participant.

But the literary taste and habit most widely prevalent among the Arabians was that of epitomising their ancient authors, historians as well as geographers,—insomuch that they have for the most part reduced both history and geography to a kind of skeleton, presenting nothing more than the mere names of kings and people, with the dates of certain events, most of which have but slight importance or are altogether irrelevant to the purpose in hand, while they have in other parts exhibited a needless prolixity, even to the enumeration of the hours during which some prince may have lived or reigned, and again have neglected to mention circumstances and events of the utmost interest and moment.

The older Arabic writers are much more exact and consequent in their relations than are the moderns, all of whose narratives, with the exception of very few indeed, such as Abulfeda and Ben Chaledun, for example, want exactitude in the relation of events, beside that they are ill-connected and unequal as to manner, being sometimes immoderately prolix and redundant in description, at others injudiciously concise. In those battles wherein their party were victors, these writers are more especially minute, while the battles won by

their opponents are dismissed with two words, giving intimation of nothing more than a fearful carnage. Such is for the most part the spirit of these authors: yet I repeat that this censure does not comprise all, since there are some good historians who must not be confounded with these less meritorious writers.

The Arabic authors known in Europe and published there by the Doctors Selden, Pococke, Erpenio, Golio, Schultens, and Reische, are not of great utility as regards the history of Spain.

Neither in the dynasties of Abulfaragi, nor in the annals of Aben Batrik of Alexandria, is there any mention of Spanish affairs; and although there is a short account of the conquest of Spain in the Annals of Elmacen, which are abridged from those of Tabari, yet this is confined to the notification of the year in which that event took place, and to the record of the death of the principal Omeyan kings of Cordova, all which is given in very few words.

The Mosleman annals of Abulfeda do not even make mention of the Arab entrance into Spain, of their conquest of that Country, or of the first emirs or prefects by whom they were conducted; neither do they describe the wars of the nation: they speak only of the last days of the Omeyan princes, depicting even the physiognomy of some, while they do but allude to the death of others. They add a few words likewise respecting the Hamudian princes of Malaga, and of the sovereigns of the House of Edris, but all in the most obscure and superficial manner.

The History of the Saracens, published by the Englishman Simon Ockley, and taken from Wakedi and others, is confined to the conquest of Syria, and to certain details respecting Egyptian affairs: it is therefore not calculated to throw light on the subject here treated.

There is a history of the Conquests of the Arabs in Spain and Africa, written in French by Monsieur de Cardonne, and that work has been translated by the Germans and English; but the writer has consulted no other Arabic authors than those from which extracts had been made by our learned Archbishop Don Rodrigo, with some of the notes of Herbelot, in which are comprised what has been related by Novairi: what M. de Cardonne ultimately found written in

our Spanish histories in relation to the affairs of Granada, he has repeated, but without correcting the faults of any one among these his authorities. Thus he has copied the chronological error of the Archbishop, whose account of the arrival of the Arabs in Spain Monsieur Cardonne has reproduced. He calls Taric Ben Zeyad, Taric Ben Malic el Meafir; and, as if the Arab captain were another person, he calls him in the following page "Tarid Ben Ziad, Ben Abdallah." The French author likewise makes Muza enter Spain in the year 97 of the Hegira, or 715 of our era, although he had already left Spain in that year by order of the Caliph, and had then proceeded to Syria. He speaks of the Conquest of Murcia as if it had been made by Taric, while the Arabian writers describe "the capitulation of Turiola" as made to Abdelaziz in the year of the Hegira 94. M. de Cardonne has indeed reproduced the narrations of our Chroniclers with so little discretion that he repeats even the miracles and prodigies described in some of these writers without any better authority than their own, those fables not being named at all in the Arabic writers: nay, the carelessness of Cardonne has proceeded to such a length that he makes Jelid Ben Hatim enter Fez at a time when that city had not yet commenced its existence; seeing that Fez was not founded until the year of the Hegira 192.

Monsieur de Guignes, in his History of the Huns, has displayed much learning respecting the Chinese and Tartars, but of our Arabs he gives only a few names and certain superficial notices, mingled with important errors and extraordinary misrepresentations. He affirms, for example, that the King Hixem the Second was deposed by his Hajib or minister, Almanzor, in the year of the Hegira 399;—but this is a grievous falsehood, as well as error, seeing that the renowned Almanzor was a most true and loyal subject during all his life, which he employed wholly for the aggrandisement of the State, and finally lost in the service of his sovereign that very Hixem whom De Guignes accuses him of deposing. Five-and-twenty years were passed by the Hajib Almanzor in the most glorious actions for the benefit of his king; and after innumerable proofs of devoted loyalty, he died fighting the battles of the same monarch in the year 392, seven years before King Hixem, according to the erroneous computation of Monsieur de Guignes, was ex-

pelled from the throne. Another proof of the fidelity of Almanzor is, that two of his sons succeeded him consecutively in the office of minister to King Hixem, whom they served with similar zeal and loyalty, if not with equal good fortune.

The History of the Arabs by Monsieur de Marigny scarcely makes any mention of the conquests undertaken by that people in Africa and Spain.

In our own times it has been supposed that the History of the Arabs in Spain could be compiled from the fragments published by Casiri in his work on the Library of the Escurial: the Englishman Murphy, and our own writer Masdeu,* have attempted it in this manner, and without any other guides. I am not now to descant on the merits of these two works, but regard for truth compels me to say, that the fragments translated by Casiri have been to the darkness of our History rather as the lightnings which dazzle and bewilder, than as the beneficent beams that enlighten and illustrate. In his work there are many errors and much confusion respecting persons, places, and times, which cannot be rectified, except by such as read the originals, whom Casiri has but imperfectly rendered, copying and translating them in the utmost haste, leaving numerous *lacunæ*, and committing other important faults: he has, indeed, not unfrequently described an event in a manner wholly unlike the truth, as given in the original; nay, has sometimes written what is altogether the contrary of the relation which he there found.

Many pages would be required to enumerate the errors, historical and geographical, into which Casiri has fallen; it shall suffice me, therefore, to cite the following as a proof of the truth of what I here assert:—In page 65 of his 2nd vol. he tells us that the Beni-Alaftas† commenced their dominion in Badajoz in the year of the Hegira 561, and that they subsequently extended their power over Saragossa and other cities of Spain: but there is here an important error, since the Beni-Alaftas ceased to exist in the year of the Hegira 487, and by consequence could not have com-

* A Catalan author much esteemed in Spain for his critical writings, De Marles.

† Sons of Alafta.—TRANSLATOR.

menced their sovereignity at the period given by Casiri, 74 years subsequent to their extinction, that is to say;—but it is in fact absolutely uncertain whether this family, which did but give four kings to Algarve, ever held dominion of any kind in Saragossa and some other cities. One prince of that house only, Labib Ben Alaftas, brother to the first king of Badajoz, was Wali or Governor of Tortosa, but the Beni-Alaftas were never sovereigns in the Eastern part of Spain.

In page 103 Casiri mentions four personages as kings of Spain and Seville, the three first being of the dynasty of the Beni-Abed, and the fourth, King of Seville, of a different family: but all this is mere confusion. He whom Casiri calls Abu Chaled was son of the King Abulcasem, but never reigned in any part of Spain. Abulcasem is the same with Muhamed Almostamed, King of Seville, whose successor in the kingdom was Abu Amru, called Almotamed Bila, to whom there also succeeded a son named Muhamed, and called in like manner Almotamed Bila. This was the last of the Beni-Abed; and one of his numerous sons was that Abu Chaled Jezid El Radhi, on whom his father conferred the government of Algeziras; he it was who, by command of his father, received Juzef, when the latter came to the aid of the Spanish kings. After having obeyed that order, which he did with infinite reluctance, Abu Chaled passed into Ronda, where he was assassinated by Carur, captain of the Almoravides.

Again, El Abu Mohamed Omar, Ben Almodafar, never reigned in Seville; he was the successor of Gehwar in Cordova, and lost both the city and state, which were obtained by the King of Seville.

In page 104 Casiri introduces a certain Almanzor, King of Calat Hamad (which he translates Alamedilla), but there never was any such reign or such city in Spain. Calat Hamad was a fortress in the state of Magreb El Wast, or the middlemost, in the kingdom of Tunis, that is to say, and Casiri's Alamedilla is a mere absurdity. In page 112 he tells us that the Beni-Merines took their rise in the year of the Hegira 672, and this is another mistake: according to all the historians, the Beni-Merines first appeared in the year 610, and in the West of Africa, where they made themselves masters of Fez, which they took from the Almohades: in 667 they already occupied all Morocco.

Many other inaccuracies deform the work of Casiri, who calls Jacub Juzef, king of the Almohades, a sovereign of the Almoravides; he confounds the Walis or governors with the kings, and the sons with the fathers, attributing to one ruler the actions of another: as, for example, in the case of Don Sancho, whom he makes the conqueror of cities vanquished by the king of Granada, Muhamed the Second. He takes the Galos, who were Gauls, for the Gallegos, who were Gallicians; he confounds the city of Malaga with that of Ronda, Cosutia with Ecija, and the Cid Campeador with the Emperor Don Alfonso: producing that last result by the mutilation of a very important narrative transmitted to us by Ben Besam, an excellent writer, whom Casiri copied badly and could not translate well. This author has thereby caused the Castilian hero to disappear from the history of the Arabs, although frequently mentioned by Arabian authors, and by so doing he has induced not a few writers to consider the whole of the Chronicles as fabulous, to speak of the renowned exploits of the Cid as mere inventions, and to treat even his existence as matter of doubt, or as though all were simple tradition and legends of the people,—a story based on no higher authority than the Romance of the Twelve Peers, or the Battles of the Zegirs and Abencerrages,* described by Gines Perez de Hita.†

The knowledge of the Arabic language only, if unaccompanied by critical judgment and acquaintance with historical literature, does not suffice to enable an author to make choice of useful and judicious extracts from those works amidst which the notices required are scattered and disseminated without order or arrangement. The later writers have been but too much accustomed to abridge or otherwise disfigure the relation and events originally described with exactitude and correctness by the ancient authors; and he who without care or reflection shall now extract incautiously from the pages of the former, or shall copy them without consideration, is exposed to the danger of propagating serious errors.

* Of whom history has made no mention, notwithstanding their frequent appearance in the pages of romance.—TRANSLATOR.

† The writer of a Spanish romance founded on facts connected with the civil wars of Granada.—TRANSLATOR.

From what has been here said it will be readily inferred that I have endeavoured to study carefully whatever books and authors connect themselves with my subject, or such of them at least of whose works I have been able to obtain a knowledge. I have been compelled to examine all, that I might compare and rectify the whole with impartiality, and might then avail myself of such useful notices as each might contain. I have also been especially cautious in the study of the Arabic writers, whose names I will presently enumerate, and in so doing will proceed to give some account of the MSS. whereof I have made use.

This History of the Domination of the Arabs in Spain is in fact compiled from a selection of Arabic documents and books, all ancient and well accredited: to repeat what they relate has been my constant care, and I propose to do so, in almost every case, in their own words faithfully translated, and no others. Thus, while acquiring a knowledge of the deeds of the Spanish Arabians, the reader will at the same time be enabled to judge of their genius, and will remark the style in which they narrated their actions. I have nevertheless omitted the mere traditions on which the Arabs frequently based their relations; and, wherever it was advisable to do so, have spared my reader the long and prolix chain of names and appellations wherewith certain of their historiographers not unfrequently encumber their pages.

The student of History, then, may read this book as one written by an Arabic author, since it is in effect a faithful translation of, and extracts from, large numbers of those authors; bearing this in mind, therefore, he will not be surprised either by the material difference, which he cannot fail to discover, between the narrations of this History and those found in our books, or by the slight notice which the former takes of our own kings and captains, their exploits and government. This book is in fact the reverse, as it were, of our histories; and as in these there is little or nothing respecting the succession and order of the Arabic dynasties, or the Moorish customs and laws, so in that now before us there will be found but few details respecting the monarchs of Castile and Leon. Nor can it well be otherwise. The names of Ruderico, Teodomiro, Atanaildo, Alfonso, Ramiro, Ordoño, and Veremundo, are the only ones that appear in

the older Arabic writers, while in later times none others have been seen in the works of their authors than those of Alfonsos, Fernandos, Garcias, Sanchos, Remandos, Armengaudos, Gacumes, Condes of Barcelona, Ruderico el Campeador, Albarhanis, the Conde de Gomis, and Almanrig;—at a word, our history is found to have been as obscure and unknown to them as theirs has been to us.

I have designedly preserved the names of certain places, offices of dignity, employments, &c., in the Arabic, since the translation of these would for the most part have caused a material change in the signification, and would occasionally have rendered them of less moment and dignity than is attributed to them by the Arabic manners. Thus there will be constantly found mention of "Emirs, Walis, Viziers, Cadis, Alcaydis, Xeques, Hagibes, Almucademes, Arrayaces," &c., with other appellations of expeditions and conquests; such as "Algihed, Algara," &c., each of which distinguishes the purpose and intent of the War in question, and whether it be an invasion, a sudden onslaught, an irruption, or an extended conquest,—all these being separately distinguished by the Arabic writers, with prolix descriptions of their varying character. I have nevertheless taken care to prevent the text from being rendered obscure by the foreign appellatives thus preserved therein.

In like manner I have retained in the first periods of this History not a few of those mis-statements of the names of our towns and provinces, which the reader will not fail to remark, thinking that these may serve to show the origin of many names of numerous places which still retain those first imposed on them. I have even sometimes adopted the divisions and names of the hours which the Arabs give to their day,—as the Hour of Azohbi, or the dawn; the hour of Adoha, or the full daylight; the Adohar, or noon-day; that of Alazar, or the middle of the afternoon; of Almagrib, or the sunset; of Alatema or Alaxá, the twilight or nightfall,—for these, when once understood, will produce no confusion, but will rather serve the better to intimate the religious customs of the Arabs in their divisions of the day according to the hours of their Azalas or prayers.

Furthermore, and since poetry and the sciences formed an

important part of education among the equestrian orders of our Arabic society, and are admirably calculated to give evidence of their genius and illustrate their manners, I will not deprive my History of this ornament, as adopted by the Arabic taste, since there is no History of any merit among them which is not adorned with verses in greater or less profusion. For this cause I have inserted such couplets as have appeared to me most characteristic, and which for the most part have relation to historical events: but even in this portion of the work I have sought to imitate the originals in my translation, having given the verses in the metre of our romance, that being the method in most frequent use among Arabic writers; and thence our own measure has without doubt proceeded. I have likewise caused these lines to be printed as they were written by the Arabs, one of whose verses, which they divide into two parts, is equivalent to two of ours: thus our first verse is equal to the first half or hemistich of the Arab, which they call the Sadrilbait or portal to the verse, while our second verse corresponds with the other Arab hemistich, which they name the Ogzilbait or end of the verse, both having an equal number of syllables. The Cafia, consonancia, or rhyme, is at the ogzilbait, or end, of the verse:* so that one strophe of our romance, composed of four verses, corresponds to four hemistichs or two verses of the Arabic authors. These remarks I have made, lest the mode of arranging the lines which I have seen fit to adopt should appear singular to the reader's eye, and have done so moreover that the Arabic origin of our metres might at once be perceived. If ever I am able to publish the translation which I have completed of various Arabian poems, I shall be prepared to prove, in the preliminary discourse to be prefixed to them, the great and powerful influence which the Arabian poesy has exercised over that of Spain.

Throughout the whole of my History I use the computation of time as made by the Arabians, and note the years of the Christian era in the margin. For the most part it may be borne in mind that each year of the Hegira falls

* Which is not always the case with Spanish verse, where our readers will remember that the rhyme sometimes occurs in the middle of the lines.—TRANSLATOR.

into two of those of the common era, taking some months from the end of one and the commencement of the other, that is to say: I have not always brought the months and days to their exact coincidence, from the wish to avoid prolix repetitions, but for whoever shall desire to verify the date of an action, it will be always easy to do so, if he will but remember that the Arabic year is lunar, each common year being of 354 days, while the intercalary year is of 355 days. Thus it follows that the commencement of each year is variable, the month of January retroceding by ten or eleven days; and when the common year of the Arab calendar concurs with our intercalary year, that month retrocedes twelve days, whence it follows that in the course of thirty-four years the commencement of their year passes through or falls in each one of our months: wherefore it is in the first instance essential to ascertain in what day and month of our year that of Arabia commences.

The order of their months, which they call lunas or moons, is as follows:—Maharrem, Safer, Rabié the first, Rabié the second, Giumada the first, Giumada the second, Regeb, Xaban, Ramazan, Xawal, Dylcada, and Dilhagia. Each month is computed from the appearance of one new moon to that of another; this interval never exceeds thirty days nor falls below twenty-nine, and thus they compute them alternately; but the last month, Dilhagia, always has thirty days in the intercalary year.

Homaidi tells us that in the earliest days of the Arabic nation, they computed the periods of time after great events, remarkable droughts or extraordinary floods, and subsequently from the foundation of the Caaba or quadrangular house, which is the oldest temple at Mecca,—a structure which they believe to have been erected by Abraham or Ishmael. At a later period they counted from the Ethiopian war, or the expedition of the Lord of the Elephant, a point of time which they still call that of Alfil or the Elephant. Finally, taking occasion from Mohamet and his Hegira, flight, or retirement, from Mecca to Medina, they began to count from that period; and it is from this last-named epoch that they compute to this day. According to the most accurate calculations the chronologists agree to place the Hegira or commencement of the flight on the 16th of June, in the year of our Lord 622.

As regards the style of the following History, since it is a translation of and compilation from various authors, there will certainly be some inequality of manner observable in its narrations; but not to such an extent, I think, as to offend the genius of our language, or to overpass the variety which historical relations are well calculated to ensure. Be that as it may, my principal care has been to prove myself exact and faithful, giving to the work that character which truly belongs thereto, being as it is a compilation from the Arabic. Another, endowed with more command of our language and superior eloquence, might certainly have done better in this respect: I confess this, knowing it to be so. Our rich language owes much to the Arabian, not in isolated words only, but even in idioms, terms of expression, metaphoric forms and phrases, all of which serve to justify the remark that the Spanish is in so far but a corrupted dialect of the Arabian. The style and expression of the Chronicon General, compiled by order of Don Alfonso X., and the book of Count Lucanor, with some other works of the Infante Don Juan Manuel, as for example the "History of Ultramar," are, in fact, written according to the forms of the Arabian Syntax, and nothing but the mere sound of the words distinguishes them from books written wholly in the Arabic tongue.

There now remains only that I mention the Arabic works and writers used in the compilation of the present History. This appears to me to be requisite, to the end that the reader may receive full assurance of my good faith and veracity, since it might not be sufficient that I affirm in mere words the sincerity of my heart, which is nevertheless a stranger to all dissimulation or deceit. I desire, therefore, to afford all who now are, or hereafter shall be, acquainted with the Arabic tongue, an opportunity for comparing what is here written with the originals; thus, judging my labour and correcting my errors or imperfections, those who come after may ameliorate them until the subject shall become more and more fully enlightened, to the advantage and profit of all. To me, meanwhile, it shall suffice to possess that satisfaction which I shall derive from having been the first to commence the undertaking.

The MSS. of which I have availed myself are as follows:— The work of Abu Abdallah Ben Abi Nasr, El Homaidi, of

Cordova, which contains a short chronicle of the conquest of Spain, the series of Emirs or prefects thereof, the line of the Beni-Omeyas, kings of Cordova, and the lives of many among the illustrious men of Spain. This author wrote to the year of the Hegira 450, and his work was continued by Ahmed Ben Yahye, Ben Ahmed, Ben Omeira, who brought it down to the year 560. El Homaidi, besides that he is himself of respectable antiquity, has furthermore cited Abdelmelic Ben Habib Zalemi, Abdallah Ben Junes, Abdallah Ben Wahib, Alaitz Ben Saad, and Abul Casem Abderahman Ben Abdallah, Ben Abdelhakem, all of whom were writers belonging to the earliest times of the Arabs, and treat of their conquests in the West. El Homaidi's book is a folio volume on dark and thick paper.

In like manner I have availed myself of the History of Aben Alabar El Codai of Valencia, for the events of the conquest, for the government of the Walis and Emirs, for the period of the first dynasty, and for the middle part of the Arabic Domination. The supplement to this work, which treats of the illustrious men of Spain, I have also found frequently useful: the writer, who was a very learned man, extracted and copied much from the celebrated History of Spain by Abu Meruan, Ben Hayan, Ben Chalf, the diligent and renowned historiographer of the Beni-Omeya dynasty. Aben Alabar has furthermore made use of the Annals of Abul Hassan Ben Besan, and of other writers less distinguished; among whom may be mentioned Iza Ben Hamed, Ben Muhamed, Ben Muza El Razif, Mocri Abu Abdallah, Ben Abdelaziz, Ben Saad, Axati; and Muhamed Abu Becar Ben Jucef Ben Casem, El Xelbi, whose History of Aben Abed, King of Seville, Aben Alabar has frequently turned to account.

I have likewise been much assisted by a valuable fragment of the History of Spain, which will be found at the end of this same codex of Aben Alabar El Codai,* and wherein the events of the arrival of the Arabs, and the first period of

* El Codai. Axati-Xelbi. These appellatives, which the reader will frequently find added to the many other names borne by the actors in the work before us, refer for the most part to the Tribe of the bearer. They are sometimes, but less frequently, the denomination of his family.—TRANSLATOR.

their domination, are carefully related. In this fragment Ahmed Ben Abi Alfeyadh is often cited: the work is in folio, and is printed on paper; there are three volumes, and the oldest copy that I have seen is not earlier than the 15th century of our era.

For the central period of the Arab domination, I have not unfrequently availed myself of that work of Meraudi, entitled "The Golden Meadows," since this ancient and renowned historian, who treats of the affairs of all nations, for the period within his own times, has given a concise relation of numerous events concerning the Spanish interests, which took place in the year 327 of the Arabs. He also supplies many brief notices relating to the expedition of Abderahman III., with others of the reciprocal conquests and devastations of Zamora by the troops of the King of Cordova and the Christians; the latter led by King Radmir of Gallicia. The work of Meraudi extends to the year 336, at which period that author flourished. He mentions the Kings of Gallicia, Odron, and Adfons; that is to say, Ordoño and Alfonso, kings of Leon, which country the Arabs frequently include under the name of Gallicia: The two volumes of which his work consists are on thick paper; they are an African copy of considerable antiquity.

For the events of the Civil War which broke forth on the extinction of the Beni-Omeyan dynasty in Spain, between the various kings, or leaders of tribes, as they may more properly be called, each independent in his rule, but all confederated together, and who then divided among them the provinces of Spain;—for this period, I say, "The History of Illustrious Spaniards," by Abul Casem Chalaf, Ben Abdelmelic, Ben Bascual of Cordova, has given me valuable aid. This work comprises the first century after the Hegira, and descends to the fifth, at which period the author flourished. It is a folio volume written on card-board paper, of great age.

For all that concerns the epoch of the Almoravide and Almohade Moors, I have availed myself entirely of the History of Fez, by Abdel Hatim of Granada, a careful and diligent writer of the year 726, who had seen and made extracts from the principal historians of Africa and Spain, frequently citing the rolls and registers of the royal archives,

which are documents of the highest authenticity, and of great importance as regards the acts of the kings treated of. The work is in 4to.; it is written on paper, and is an African copy of the middle ages. Among other extracts made for his work by this author, are some from that of Aly Ben Muhamed Ben Aly Zorich or Zara, which others cite as in MS., and which is entitled "The Book of the Peaceful Friend in the Garden of Letters." It treats of the kings of the West, and is a history of the city of Fez.

For the last period of the Arab domination, I have consulted the works of Lizan-Edin Ben Alchatib, Asalemini, secretary to the kings of Granada. His most important writings, and those which I have most frequently used, are the History of the Dynasties of Africa and Spain, in verse, with the author's notes in prose; the History of Granada, which he calls "The Full-Moon of the Nasrina Dynasty in Granada," and his three volumes of "Biographical Memoirs:" they are all copies due to the middle ages, and not of higher antiquity.

For the affairs of Granada, I have likewise used the History of its Kings, written by Abdala Algiazami of Malaga, as I have that written by Ahmed Almaxarsi of the illustrious ruler of Granada, King Jucef Abul Hagiag, with the History of the Beni-Merines, composed in verse and prose by Ismael Ben Jucef, Emir of Malaga, and entitled "The Odour of the Rose." All these works are copies of but little antiquity.

I have also consulted the Annals of Abulfeda, with those of Xakibi and Fesani, which are imperfect copies, but of tolerably high antiquity. I have, moreover, found assistance in the annals of Aben Sohna, a very elegant copy.

From the work of Abu Teib of Ronda, I have made numerous extracts, seeing that together with stories and anecdotes of various poets, and of such princes as have been generous towards them, there are mingled not a few singular events and very curious notices respecting our Arabs.

Lastly, I proceed to mention the rare work of Abdallah Aly Ben Abderahman Ben Huzeil of Granada, who treats of the "Sacred Expeditions," or Wars against the Christians; of the art military, of the guardianship of frontiers, of espionage, and of strategy in its various forms: bold feats of

arms, weapons, machines of war, and chivalry in all its manifestations, are the topics of this writer. From Huzeil's work I have been supplied with accounts of battles and military events not mentioned by other authors, and have found many curious details in his pages respecting the manners and customs of the Spanish Arabs. The book is in folio; it is written on thick paper of dark colour, and is of tolerable antiquity.

The greater part of these MSS. are in the Biblioteca Real or Public Library of Madrid. Some few of them, however, belong to myself, and others to my friends.

And now I will not omit to add, as a proof of my desire and care to render my work as accurate as possible, that in the year 1807 I presented a humble supplication to the King, Señor Don Carlos IV. to the effect that he should cause an exact copy to be made of an Arabic MS. still existing in the Royal Library of Paris, that I might avail myself of whatever notices it might contain; the work in question, being a History and Description of Spain, by Ahmed El Mocri, Almagrebi. His Majesty had thereupon the goodness to command that the copy should be prepared at his own cost, and the care of seeing it done, with the correction of its pages, was confided to the two learned French orientalists, the Señors Sacy and Langles, under whose direction it could not fail to come forth with the utmost exactitude. In the year 1818, having learnt that the work was completed, I requested and obtained an order to the effect that it should be sent to Madrid by our Ambassador in Paris, to whose charge the affair had been committed, and by whom it had indeed been most carefully attended to. Yet the end of all is that I have never been able to gain possession of this precious copy, nor can I even learn where it now is, or I would gladly make known that fact to others, who may at some future time be more fortunate than myself.

As it was of importance that a clear order and arrangement should be preserved in the long narration of events before us, I have divided the History into four parts. The first treats of the Entrance of the Arabs into Spain, and of the Emirs or Leaders of the Conquest who were dependent on the Caliphs of the East. The second contains the Establishment of the Monarchy of the Beni-Omeyan Sovereigns,

and the Succession of those kings. The third comprises the Civil War and subsequent Division of the Kingdoms of Spain, with the Arrival of the Almoravide and Almohade Moors, and the Succession of the Dynasties which they established. The fourth treats of the whole of the kingdom of Granada, which was the last period of the Arab domination in Spain.

HISTORY

OF THE

DOMINION OF THE ARABS IN SPAIN.

PART I.

I HERE propose to write the history of the Domination of the Arabs in Spain, from their first arrival and entrance into the country and their conquest of the same: a long series of great events and remarkable circumstances, for the greater part almost entirely unknown, the truth having long remained mingled with fabulous traditions, all of which were accredited in times of popular ignorance, and have at length become almost inextricably interwoven with the true history of events.

But before commencing the relation of these many facts, it may be well to say briefly what these Arabs were, and of what character were their customs; adding a short intimation of the causes which impelled them to abandon the fields of Yemen and lead the conquering ensigns of Islam* to the extremities both of the East and West. We will first speak of the opinions held of them in those days, and of the renown they obtained by their wonderful conquests, next proceeding to relate, how, after having subjugated Egypt, Cyrenaica, the people of ancient Carthage, and both the

* Islam, or the Faith; for so it is that the Mahometans call their Creed. The word signifies confidence in, and devotion to, the will of God as manifested in the Koran, and from this word it is that the followers of Mahomet have adopted their present custom of calling themselves Muslimen or Moslemah.—*Condé.*

Mauritanias, to the uttermost extremity of the lands that lie beneath the sunset, they then pressed onward, and not without illustrious fortunes, into the noble realms of Spain, where they founded so mighty and so flourishing an empire.

CH. I.—Of the ancient Arabs.

The Arabs, so called from the extensive region of Arabia which they inhabit, and which is situate between Persia, Syria, Egypt, and Ethiopia, were idolators up to the time when their renowned legislator Mahomet appeared among them. The two Arabias—"the Felix," thus named from the mildness of its climate and the aromatic character and rich perfumes of its plants, and "the Desert," a district much less thickly peopled, and named from the sandy plains of which it largely consists—were occupied by various Kabilas or Tribes, some of whom dwelt in towns, while others, continually wandering, changed the site of the tents and pavilions which formed their abode, so soon as they had exhausted the resources of one district, when, for the sake of the vast herds they possessed, the whole Kabila removed to another, but in all changes and in every land preserving carefully the patriarchal character of life which they had inherited from their ancestors the sons of Ishmael.

To speak of the customs and manners of these ancient Arabs would be to describe the virtues and vices of society in its state of infancy. Saad Ben Ahmed, who was Cadi of the city of Toledo, affirms that there have been two races of Arabs, one of which has passed away, while the other remains still in existence. The extinguished race * was a very numerous one; but of their tribes, as for example those of Ad, Themud, Tesm, and Jadis, almost every vestige is lost in the darkness of ages, nor do we possess any authentic accounts of the families that belonged to them. Those of the race that remains are divided into two Castes, called of Cahtan and Adnan, from the names of their first known

* Whose origin is to be traced beyond the times of Abraham, and is lost in the darkest mists of antiquity.—*Condé.*

chiefs: their history is divided into two epochs, that of Ignorance, and that of Islam.

During the period of Ignorance the Arabs were renowned among the nations for their warlike qualities, and the great extent of their power; the sovereignty resided in the Kabila or Tribe of Cahtan, and the principal family of kings known among them were the Homiares: from these they had sovereigns and rulers, called the Tobeos or "Successors," in long progression. The rest of the nation was divided, during the period of Ignorance, into two classes, one of which dwelt exclusively in towns; the other was composed of shepherds.

Of these two, the first lived on the fruits of various labours: they sowed and planted, they gathered the increase of their flocks, they trafficked among themselves, and established trade with the people of other lands, sending their products far and wide.

The shepherds, on the other hand, passed their whole lives in the fields and deserts, where they sustained themselves on the milk and flesh of their camels, changing their abode as they needed pasture for their animals; when they found a valley or other place supplied with grass and shade, clear brooks or wells, there they set up their tents, and remained until similar motives caused them to resume their wanderings. Thus did they continue to pass their time in the seasons of spring and summer, but when the winter approached, and the fruits of the earth began to fail, they withdrew to the more fertile regions of Isak or Chaldea, or even to the confines of Syria, preparing to pass the months of winter as commodiously as they might, and for the rest enduring the inclemencies of the season with much patience.

With respect to the modes of their belief, there was some difference. The tribe of Homiare offered its prayers to the sun, that of Canenah to the moon, Misam to the star Aldebaran, Laham and Jedam to the planet Jupiter, Tay and Kais to certain constellations: Asad adored the planet Mercury, while to the tribe of Jzaguif, the most sacred of objects was an idol occupying a small temple erected on the heights of Nahla, and which was called "Alat." There were, moreover, some among them who believed in the

resurrection of the dead, and these held it fitting that a man should sacrifice his horse or camel on his tomb.

The science on which the Arabs most prided themselves was that of their own language, and its different modifications; with the construction of verse, and the elegancies of discourse: they were also acquainted with the course of the stars, their rising and setting; they knew which among them was opposed to another, in such sort as that when one of those orbs arose, the other should set. They were accustomed also to decide as to which of the stars brought rain, and which clear weather. So much they deduced from that habit of constantly observing the heavens, day and night, which resulted from their manner of life, since they did not at that time possess any true science. Of philosophy they knew but little, for to that elevation God had not permitted them to attain.

Such, then, was their condition in the times of Ignorance. At a period but little precedent to that of Islam, the Arabs were governed by their Emirs or kings of tribes,—of such tribes, that is to say, as had fixed themselves in a certain district, or confined their wanderings principally to that part. Subject to but few restraints, these people were almost constantly in strife, either among themselves or with the dwellers in neighbouring districts: excited by the lightest causes, these discords not unfrequently arose for the possession of some well or pasture ground, of which the shepherds disputed the property; but they were, for the most part, as easily appeased by their emirs and elders, who were the chiefs or captains of their tribes; or they would occasionally require the mediation of some neighbouring and impartial tribe, who readily restored peace.

The most important Emirs or chiefs of tribes sometimes placed themselves under the protection of the sovereigns of Persia; others occasionally had recourse for the same purpose to the Greek emperors or kings. They occupied themselves much in the breeding and discipline of horses, and possessed remarkable dexterity in the use of the bow, as well as in the management of the sword and lance. They were accomplished horsemen, wheeling their coursers, when at full speed, with the utmost grace and facility, and emulating each other in leaping upon their horses, and other feats of agility.

They were infinitely proud of their ancient nobility of race, attributing their descent to Ishmael, and they likewise gloried much in their unalloyed independence. They prided themselves also on the grace and elegance with which they spoke their language, and delighted greatly in the florid and ornate beauties of their poesy; each man placing high value, moreover, on the reputation for hospitality, and for that generous protection of all who needed their aid, which the Arabs were in effect ever ready to accord with the utmost liberality.

CHAP. II.—Of the origin of islam.

Mahomet was born at Mecca, a city in the district of Hegiaz, celebrated for its ancient temple called Alharam, the origin of which was attributed to Ishmael. It was dedicated to the true God, and was frequented from the most remote times by all the peoples and nations of the East. Mahomet was of the Kabila of Coraix, one of the most illustrious tribes of Arabia, and he belonged to the principal family of that tribe.* By his genius, bravery, and good policy, he succeeded, although not without great difficulties, in enforcing his new creed on the tribes of his people, and now, if any man doubt of the heroic valour and elevation of soul by which Mahomet was adorned and distinguished, let him enquire of the fields of Honaim, of Bedre, and of Ohod.† He taught his followers to believe in one sole, eternal and all-powerful God—the Creator of heaven and earth, and of all that we find in them. He inculcated a

* The reader will remember that our author proposes to use the words of his ancient authorities, and does so in this instance as well as many others.—Tr.

† His father was Abdallah the son of Abdelmotaleb, son of Hasam, son of Abdmena, son of Morra, son of Caab, son of Lova, son of Galeb, son of Fehr, son of Malec, son of Alnadhr, son of Kenanah, son of Hozaimah, son of Modreca, son of Alyas, son of Modhar, son of Nazar, son of Maad, son of Adnan. His mother was called Amina, and was of the same tribe whence his father had derived his origin. This genealogy is confirmed by all the Arabian chronologists, who agree also in admitting that Adnan was a lineal descendant of Ismael.—*Condé.*

perfect resignation to the divine will, which holds all things in order, according to eternal and immutable decrees of infinite wisdom. He furthermore taught that the Supreme Power rewards the good in a future life, by admitting them to a paradise of ineffable delights; while He punishes the wicked in the torture of fire. He commanded the use of certain practices of ablution and purification; enjoining likewise daily prayer, alms-giving, and religious pilgrimage to the Temple of Alharem.

Mahomet thus succeeded, after a certain lapse of time, in displacing the idolatry of Arabia; he also reunited the previously unconnected tribes, and ultimately imbued his followers with a fanatical zeal for Islam, inspiring them with the most ardent desire for the extension thereof through all parts of the world.

About this period, a short time only, that is to say, before the appearance of Mahomet, the Arabs were accustomed to compute their year from the Ethiopian Wars, which they called the arrival of the Lords of the Alfil or Elephant,* but after the celebrated Hegira, flight or retirement of Mahomet and his followers from Mecca to Medina Yatrib,† they began to count their years from that important event. Mahomet was then 54 years old,‡ since he was born at the hour of dawn on the day called after Mars,§ and the eighth of the moon Rebie Primera, or the first Rebie, corresponding in the months of the Christians to the twenty-second of Nisan in the year 822 of Alexander‖, insomuch that, according to the most accredited chronologists, the time when the Arabs began to compute from the Hegira corresponds with the seventh of July in the year A.D. 622.

* In this war, the Arabs were led by Abdelmotaleb, the grandfather of Mahomet, who defended his country with much ability, and totally routed the king of Ethiopia. The circumstances of this war, which is mentioned in the Koran, are described by numerous writers, and among them by Jusuf Ben Said of Illora, who depicts them with much elegance in his commentary on the poem Elborda, MS.—*Condé.*

† Medina Yatrib was the first name of the city; it was afterwards called Medina Tahnabi, the City of the Prophet, and *par excellence* Medina.—*Idem.*

‡ So says Tabari; but he was in fact not more than fifty.—*Idem.*

§ Tuesday.

‖ A.D. 572.

CHAP. III.—Of the military expeditions of the first caliphs against the Greeks and Persians.

Mahomet died in the eleventh year of the Hegira, and on Monday the twelfth day of the first Rebie. When he had thus departed, without naming any successor, the principal Moslemah chose six electors from their number, and by these men were subsequently selected the first five Caliphs and successors of Mahomet.

Abu Beere, who was the first Caliph thus chosen, was no less zealous for the propagation of the faith, as given by the Koran, than his predecessor had been: he determined to despatch forces to the distant nations of the earth, for the purpose of teaching them the knowledge of God, and of bringing them into subjection to his own empire. Having set at rest certain domestic disquietudes, and prepared his troops, the Caliph wrote a proclamation at Medina, and sent it into every part of Arabia. The contents of that document were as follows:—"In thy name, oh God! creator of heaven and earth, all-powerful and merciful Lord, Abdallah Athic Ben Abi Cohafa Abu Beere, to all the Moslemah, followers of the law of God, sendeth the greeting of health and prosperity. Praised be God, and may He increase the perfections of his servant. This letter I have written to the intent that ye may know how I have resolved to send into Syria troops, chosen from among yourselves, for the purpose of releasing that land from the power of unbelievers. And I desire that ye also know, that thus labouring for the propagation of Islam, ye will be obedient to God, and will fulfil the intentions of his Messenger; all your acts moreover will be recompensed by God with the abounding rewards of paradise."

Thus invoked, the Arabs assembled without delay for the warabout to be commenced; men came flocking to the appeal of their sovereign, as if to a festival, from every district of the land, and from all the Tribes of their nation, the towns as well as the country sending each its proportion. The sandy plains of the Hegiaz poured forth their hordes, the people from the valleys of Yemen abandoned their tents and dwel-

lings, and the shepherds from the mountains of Oran came down in great numbers. Wherever the sun darts its rays, from the northernmost point of Belis above the Euphrates to the Straits of Babel Mandeb on the south, and from Basra above the Persian Gulf to the uttermost part of the East, even to Suez and the confines of the Red Sea on the West, all came, and in numbers without count, every man with his full will to the work. Ill-furnished, indeed, with arms, and badly clothed, were these warriors, but each man was full of fervour and religious zeal: all were rejoicing and confident in the success certain to crown these first wars of the Prophet; every heart was animated by his promises; insomuch that in a short time there was a host innumerable both of horse and foot asembled at Medina, and encamped around the city.

The inhabitants of Medina then sallied forth in their turn, to be present at the review of this immense force; and in their sight the Caliph Abu Beere entrusted the supreme command of his troops to Jezid Ben Abi Sofian, commanding him, before all the people, to proceed to the conquest of Syria. He finally made a short prayer to God, whom he implored to be the guide and guardian of his host, and adjured to lend judgment and moderation, as well as strength, to his forces, nor suffer them to fall into the power of their enemies. That done, the Caliph addressed himself to Jezid in a loud voice, while all stood listening in admiring silence. "Jezid," he said, "to thy care I commit the charge of this holy war, and I confide to thee the guidance and conduct of our people. Do not oppress them, or treat any with harshness or haughtiness. Remember that all are Moslemah like thyself. Bethink thee also that there are many great and prudent captains in thy company; these do thou consult on all fitting occasions, and do not presume too much on thy own opinion, but avail thyself of their advice. Beware that thou do not act with precipitation. Proceed ever warily, and not as one who is rash and without judgment. Be just towards every man; for he who is not upright to all can never prosper."

To his troops the Caliph said: "When you meet your enemies in the fight, comport yourselves as befits a good Moslemah; and remember to prove yourselves the true

descendants of Ishmael. In the order and disposition of the host, and in all battles, be careful to follow your banners boldly, and be ever obedient to your leaders. Never yield to, or turn your backs on, your enemies; it is for the cause of God that you fight. You are incited by no less noble desire than His glory; wherefore fear not to enter into the fight, nor let the number of your foes alarm you, even though excessive. If God should give you the victory, do not abuse your advantages, and beware how you stain your swords in the blood of him who yields; neither touch ye the children, the women, nor the infirm old men whom ye may find among your enemies. In your progress through the enemy's land, cut down no palms or other fruit trees; destroy not the products of the earth; ravage no fields; burn no dwellings; from the stores of your enemy take only what you need for your wants. Let no destruction be made without necessity, but occupy the cities of the enemy; and if there be any that may serve as an asylum to your adversaries, them do you destroy. Treat the prisoner and him who renders himself to your mercy with pity, as God shall do to you in your need, but trample down the proud and rebellious, nor fail to crush all who have broken the conditions imposed on them. Let there be no perfidy nor falsehood in your treaties with your enemies; be faithful in all things, proving yourselves ever upright and noble, and maintaining your word and promise truly. Do not disturb the quiet of the monk or hermit, and destroy not their abodes, but inflict the rigours of death upon all who shall refuse the conditions you would impose on them."

The troops were subsequently divided into two great hosts, of which the first departed for Syria without delay. The Caliph then gave the command of the second to Chalid Ben Walid, whom he despatched, with similar exhortations, to Irak and the confines of Persia. These undertakings were favoured by God, who gave our Moslemah repeated and very signal victories over the Greeks and Persians. They entered by force of arms into the cities of Tadmor, Hira, Hauran, Bossora, Hemesa, Damascus, and Balbec,—the fame of these conquests infusing terror into the hearts of their enemies, insomuch that neither the most powerful armies nor the strongest forts dared long to resist the impetuosity of the Moslemah

forces. The latter were constantly opposed to men prematurely terrified, and already disposed to flight; while the Arabs, on the contrary, bold and confident of victory, met all the dangers and horrors of battle with contempt.

In the thirteenth year of the Hegira, the ancient and populous city of Damascus surrendered to the Arabian leaders Abu Obeida and Chalid, but not before the inhabitants had endured a long and sanguinary siege. At the same time died the Caliph Abu Becre, after he had reigned two years, three months, and nine days.

The Caliph, or sovereign successor, next elected, was Omar Ben Alchitab, who was also a potent master of fortune; and it pleased God that in his time the Moslemah should raise their victorious banners over the sumptuous palaces of the mighty Persian kings, and should destroy that ancient and renowned monarchy.

Having conquered all Syria, the Caliph commanded the captain, Amru Ben Alâs, to enter Egypt, which he did in the twentieth year of the Hegira, and after very glorious exploits this leader made himself master of the great city of Alexandria, and all the other towns of that most fertile region. Here, where the land is filled with the wondrous monuments of the wisdom and power of the ancient Egyptians and Greeks, Amru Ben Alâs* reduced all men to his obedience; he made tributary six millions of Copts, without counting the Jews, who were yet very numerous. The zeal, moderation, and rigorous discipline of the Moslemah captains, and the excellent order preserved by their troops, rendered all the efforts made by the Greeks for impeding their rapid conquests utterly useless,—no force was found equal to oppose them, nor could the bravest men resist the impetuosity of their onset. It would demand a great volume for that part of our subject alone, were we to describe the adventurous exploits and deeds of arms performed by only one among these captains, and that even though we should not choose one of the most renowned.

* This general had been surnamed "The Sword of God" by Mahomet himself. His death was lamented as a public calamity; and the pious Moslemah hung their hair, as was their custom, around his tomb.—*De Marlès*, vol. i. p. 49.

CHAP. IV.—Incursion of the Arabs into Africa, and conquest of Cyrenaica.

After the death of the Caliph Omar Ben Alchitab, which happened in the Moon Dilhagia, and the twenty-third year of the Hegira,* during the Caliphate of Otman Ben Afan, the Arab leader Abdallah Ben Saad Ben Abi Serah El Carsi, carried the war into Africa, which he did in the year of the Hegira 29. He was followed, some few years later, by Moavia Ben Horeig Azocuni, who made three incursions into the same land. The first of these took place some time before the death of the Caliph Otman, and in the thirty-third year of the Hegira. The second and third were made after that Caliph had departed. In the year 34 of the Hegira, Moavia entered Africa with a select troop of Muhageries and Alanseries;† and in his company was the excellent and illustrious Abdelmelic Ben Meruan. They conquered great cities, and possessed themselves of superb palaces. The ancient city of Cyrene was among those which fell; and mighty were the riches and spoils which then became the prey of the victors in those lands. The fifth part of all these riches had been assigned by the Caliph Otman to the General Moavia Ben Horeig, and the other leaders, to the end that they might have means wherewith to reward and gratify such of the Moslemah as should distinguish themselves in battle, or should perform other services of importance.

In the year 35 of the Hegira the Caliph Otman died, falling beneath the swords of conspirators, and having then reigned about twelve years.

In the year 40, the prudent leader, Moavia Ben Horeig, sent his captain, the noble Abdelmelic Ben Meruan, with a well-appointed army of 80,000 men, to Gelula, which was conquered, but not until after the Moslemah forces had performed prodigies of valour. No less rich in victories was

* A.D. 643.

† The Muhageries were those troops by whom Mahomet was accompanied in his flight; the Alansaries were those who first came to his aid as auxiliaries.—*Condé.*

the year 45; and in the following year the renowned Ocba Ben Nafe, El Fehri, entered Africa, leading 10,000 horse, when he recovered the city of Cyrene, which had cast off the Moslemah yoke, confiding in the number of its defenders and the power of its walls. During the siege Ocba Ben Nafe ruined many great and ancient edifices which were previously in that city, Cyrene being then considered the principal and chief town of the whole world, for the magnificence of its buildings. In place of the structures thus destroyed, the General subsequently caused mosques to be raised, and established schools, wherein he commanded that the language and doctrines of the true Law should be taught to such children and youths as had previously been wandering about, lost to hope, and without a refuge.

CHAP. V.—Conquest of Barbary and foundation of Cairvan.

While the renowned Ocba Ben Nafe was thus employed, the Caliph Moavia Ben Abi Sofian united the governments of Egypt and the remainder of Africa, as if they had been two unimportant provinces, giving the command of the whole to Muhegir Dinar El Ansari. This governor, envious of the good repute which Ocba Ben Nafe enjoyed among the people, no less than of his glory in arms, wrote accusations of that leader to the Caliph; and his arts prevailed to such an extent that Moavia sent him orders to depose Ocba Ben Nafe from his government of Cyrene. These orders were transferred by the Wali Muhegir to Muslama Ben Machlad; but Muhegir charged the messengers to treat Ocba Ben Nafe with all honour, fearing lest the troops should be moved to resistance by the great love and respect which he knew them to bear to their general.

Muslama arrived accordingly at the camp where Ocba was in command, and presented the letter of the Caliph, enjoining him to set himself on the way so soon as he should receive it, and repair at once to the presence of his lord. A second letter was presented at the same time by Muslama, from the Wali Muhegir, wherein the latter exhorted Ocba to obey without any excuse whatever, authorizing Muslama and

the other captains to seize and compel him to obedience, should he refuse to do so.

Ocba departed therefore on the moment, nay without even returning into his house; but arriving at Alcazaralme he there reposed himself and made his prayer. The orations he offered to God were at first silent, but at the close he raised his voice, and said—"Oh Allah, my Lord and my God, take not my life until thou hast made manifest the brightness of mine honour, and defend me from Muhegir Ben Om Dinar." When these words were repeated to the Wali, he at once began to dread the effect of that prayer.

On entering Egypt, Ocba was met by Muslama Ben Machlad, who had preceded the general to give notice of his arrival, and with him there went forth many leaders and captains of great renown, all desirous of proving the high estimation and respect in which they held the noble Ocba, and treating him with the utmost honour. Here the deposed ruler was commanded to give an account of his government, or of what he had done and caused to be done by others. He was moreover exhorted to describe his relations with Muhegir, and to assign the reason for such dissensions as existed between them.

A few days later he proceeded to the presence of the Caliph, who received him before his counsellors, captains, and the whole court. Then did the noble Ocba Ben Nafe speak as follows:—"I have conquered regions and nations of the infidel, and have brought the unbeliever to the knowledge of God and of his holy laws. I have built schools and mosques, and for the reward of these services thou hast sent command to Abdel Ansar to take possession of my person. If there be any reason for this, let thy justice declare it." To these words the Caliph replied—"I am now informed as to the true cause of the reports that have reached me; I know what Muhegir is and what is Ocba; with thy zeal and thy services am I equally content, and now hast thou satisfied me by this thy loyal and noble proceeding." The Caliph then commanded that Ocba should return to resume the command of his government. Many authors nevertheless affirm that the power of Ocba was first restored to him by Jezid the son of the Caliph Moavia, after

the death of his father, who departed in the year 60; which last account I consider the more probable one.

Ocba was indeed much distinguished and honoured by the Caliph Jezid, whom good authorities describe as saying to him,—"Now thou hast once more thy province: repair thither without loss of time, and hasten to make good all the losses thou hast sustained." Ocba departed for Africa accordingly with much diligence; he found that during his absence the envious Muhegir had caused a city which he had founded and fortified to be destroyed, and, from hatred to the labours and memory of Ocba, had forced the inhabitants to remove to a town which he had himself built two miles thence, on the way which is passed by the road to Tunis: that place Muhegir called Audan, and there are traces of its ruins remaining to this day. Other works of Ocba were in like manner destroyed by Muhegir, who drove the people of Cairvan also from their habitations, being impelled to do so by similar motives of envy and hatred.

The order of the Caliph Jezid for the deposition of Muslama was borne by Ocba, who when he had signified that order to the governor, commanded him to be transported to Fustat, a town in Egypt, which was assigned to him as his future residence. These things took place in the year 62 of the Hegira. Ocba then passed into Africa, and deposed Muhegir, whom he cast into prison; but since his protector Moavia was dead, these events did not surprise Muhegir, who had been expecting no other. Ocba furthermore commanded that the people of Cairvan should return to their dwellings; and he now watched over the progress of that city even more carefully than he had done in the times of his first government.

But there are not wanting those who affirm that Cairvan was peopled by the Wali Moavia Ben Horeig; and they relate the occurrence after this manner. When the Wali Moavia first stood on the site, it was a valley covered very thickly with trees, amidst which were large numbers of savage beasts—lions, tigers, and panthers,—with serpents of various kinds, to whom he exclaimed with a loud voice, "Depart from this wooded and shady place, ye beasts who dwell in these valleys; arise, depart, for this abode is no longer for you." These words he repeated three times on

three successive days, and it was done as he had commanded; there remained no animal, lion, tiger, or serpent, which did not immediately leave the place. Moavia then ordered his people to surround the site with high walls, and fixing his lance in the midst, he said to them—"This is your Cairvan."

Returning to Ocba, we find it related of him, that after he had once more set his government in order, he departed to the conquest of Sûs, taking with him his captured enemy Muhegir in chains. He subjugated the land, and having penetrated to the sea coast, he rode amidst the waves even to his saddle-girth, exclaiming—"O Allah, if these profound waters did not restrain me, I would yet proceed still further, to carry onward the knowledge of thy sacred Name and thy holy Law."

While Ocba was still at Sûs, he received intelligence to the effect that the people of Barbary had rebelled, and giving orders to his army, he returned with all haste to their subjugation. The leader of the Barbary forces, Aben Cahina, who but a short time before was flying to the desert before the Moslemah troops, now followed the march of Ocba's host, and cut off such of the Moslemen as struggled or broke from their companies; yet by the time that Ben Nafe reached Cairvan the rebellion was found to be subdued, and Ocba therefore divided his army into various divisions, which he quartered on the surrounding districts: this he did in the hope of rendering it less difficult to the inhabitants to furnish supplies to the troops, and for the greater advantage of all.

With a flying camp of his best cavalry, Ocba then overran the country of Zâb, and occupied a place called Telinda; but an innumerable horde of the dwellers in Barbary, assisted by the Christians, fell on him there and compelled him to the conflict: he therefore disposed his forces in order of battle, and having done so, the general made his prayer. This done, Ocba commanded that Muhegir should be brought from his prison, and when the latter had entered his presence he said to him—"To-day, O friend, is a day of liberty and of martyrdom, that highest of all gains for a Mosleman, and I will not have thee deprived of so great an occasion." "Thou hast spoken well," replied Muhegir, "no greater occasion can be offered to a Mosleman, and I thank thee

that thou hast afforded me this opportunity, better than which I cannot desire." Ocba then caused his enemy to be supplied with a good horse and arms; they both threw away the sheaths of their swords, and every other Mosleman did the same.

Desperate was the struggle which then commenced between the hosts, and the carnage was dreadful. Almost all the Moslemah died there, faithful to the Law as they were; for such was the overwhelming force of the enemy, that few escaped. Muhamed Ben Aus, El Ansari, Jezid Ben Chalaf, and some few more of the Moslemah cavaliers, were taken prisoners; but these were subsequently ransomed by Aben Mesad, Lord of Cafisa, who sent them to Zohair Ben Cais, El Balui, to whom Ocba Ben Nafe had left the government of Cairvan when he had himself departed to the conquest of Sûs, and to Omar Ben Aby, El Coreisi, both leaders of much valour and high authority.

This sanguinary battle of Telinda was fought in the year 63.*

The captain leading on the part of Barbary, even Aben Cahina, was much puffed up by this splendid victory, and, full of confidence, pushed forward with his troops to attack Cairvan, having with him more than 30,000 men. The leaders, Zohair and Omar, then went forth against him, and by the favour of God, the Moslemah conquered; Aben Cahina flying in great disorder, closely pursued by 7,000 horse, which was all the force that Zohair then held in his command.

This victory animated the Moslemah, and much enhanced the fame of the noble Captain, even Zohair Ben Cais, El Balui. Nay, Abdelaziz Ben Meruan, who was then Wali of Egypt, wrote letters to that leader, thanking him and all his force for their constancy and valour, investing him in the name of the Caliph with supreme command in Africa, and sending him men and arms to reinforce his power; a succour which he greatly needed, seeing that without such aid he could not hope to extend his conquests, or appease the troubles which had broken out in Barbary.

Meanwhile Zohair had drawn together the forces which had remained in Atrabolos, and with these troops, added to

* A.D. 682.

those that had been sent from Egypt, he resolved to leave Barca: there he had assembled all his forces, and thence he now commenced his march.

When this force had arrived at Cunia, there sallied forth to their encounter so prodigious a body of troops that it seemed to be an inundation; and Zohair, taking counsel with his captains and leaders, thus addressed his people:—

"Ye companies of the Moslemah, already have a large number of your friends gone before you, and are now enjoying the delights of Paradise; but behold, God hath this day opened to you once more the gates of eternal blessedness; wherefore what have you to fear from this host of barbarous enemies? For either, fighting as the valiant men you have proved yourselves to be, you shall obtain the victory, or you will be received into Paradise, and gain its triumphal crown." That said, the General prepared for combat.

Now Abu Sagea and a great part of the Egyptian cavalry were opposed to the desire for battle thus manifested by Zohair, and following their captain, even Abu Sagea, that portion of the force refused to take part in the danger. At the moment, therefore, when Zohair and his brave band attacked the enemy, the Egyptian cavalry retired in hurried march; and although the Arabs, honoured by the confidence of Zohair, fought most bravely, they were overcome by numbers, the Moslemah host being compelled to disperse by different ways, when Zohair himself, with some few of his people, retired to Barca; but he nevertheless maintained the frontier with great firmness.

By this victory, which they gained in the year 64, the men of Barbary obtained possession of the district around Cairvan, and even made themselves masters of the city.

When Abdelmelic Ben Meruan received notice of the defeat sustained by his forces, he repaired to Barca with troops which he joined to those of Zohair; and thus united they made fierce war on Barbary, the people of which country they finally subdued, and recovered the city of Cairvan. The Wali Zohair then continued to govern the province of Barca, until he was killed, with all who were his followers at the time, in an ambush of the Christians, which had been laid for them with much ability, and into which they fell.

At the death of Zohair, Hassan Ben Naaman, El Gasan

was Wali of Egypt, and that officer was then despatched by Abdelmelic to continue the conquest of Africa; an undertaking for which he hastened to assemble the people of the frontier, and soon gathered an army of 40,000 well-appointed men. With this force, Hassan directed his march against the city of Carthagena the Ancient, which was the chief town of all Africa. That place he besieged and beleaguered for a long time, but at length found means to force his way, when he destroyed the walls, putting to death many Greeks and Christians who had taken part in the defence; while many of the inhabitants flying to Sicily or Spain, then lost and left behind them all the wealth they had possessed.

At this time there came against Hassan a great force, led by the Queen of Barbary, who was called Cahina, a very powerful princess in those parts. She maintained the war with varying fortunes for many years, but was finally conquered by the Moslemah, who made her prisoner, with the principal persons of her court. The troops by whom she had been taken, spared her life because she was a woman and a queen; they brought her therefore to the presence of their leader Hassan, who proposed to Cahina such conditions as he thought needful for the security of quiet and peace in the land—obedience to the Caliph namely, and tribute to be paid into his hands. He furthermore exhorted the captive Queen to accept the true faith; but Cahina refusing to accede to these conditions, Hassan commanded that she should be decapitated, which was done: he subsequently caused the head to be packed in camphor and placed in a costly casket, when he sent it to Abdelmelic, with the news of his victory and many valuable presents.

Some short time after these events, Abdelaziz, the brother of Abdelmelic, excited by the report of the great riches found in the cities of Africa, desired to repair thither, and Abdelmelic yielding to his request, despatched him to Barca, in the place of Hassan Ben Naaman, whom he deposed from that government. Abdelaziz Ben Meruan proceeded to Africa accordingly, and had no sooner arrived there than he not only displaced Hassan Ben Naaman, but despoiled him of all he possessed, which he took to himself. The loss of his treasures caused Hassan so much sorrow, that he soon afterwards fell sick, and died of pure grief and vexation.

CHAP. VI.—CONQUESTS OF MUZA IN ALMAGREB OR MAURITANIA.

By order of the Wali, Abdelaziz Ben Meruan, the General Muza Ben Noseir made incursions on the land of Almagreb, and distinguished himself very greatly by his valour and prudence. Commencing his work in the seventy-eighth year of the Hegira,* Muza carried his arms into the regions of the West, and even to the deserts of the South. He sent many precious spoils to Abdelaziz Ben Meruan, whose avaricious love of gain was not unknown to him. Slaves of both sexes and of great beauty were among these treasures, with horses of the highest value.

Now Muza Ben Noseir had contrived to persuade the people of Barbary that they were Aulad-Arabi, or Sons of the Arabs; and as he treated them with great mildness, they were at length brought to request of their own accord that he would receive them among the number of his own troops; whereupon he chose 12,000 of the bravest from the lands of Gadam and Tâb, whom he incorporated with his army, and found a valuable reinforcement. Much pleased by this result of his general's good management, Abdelaziz wrote to the Caliph, expatiating on the valour and prudence of Muza Ben Noseir, whose great services he related at length.

In the year 83 of the Hegira, the Caliph, well informed of the excellent qualities of the General Muza Ben Noseir, appointed him to the supreme command of the Moslemah troops in Africa, and charged him to continue his conquests in Almagreb, naming him at the same time Emir of Africa. It was this illustrious Captain, who, subsequently entering Spain, there opened so glorious a field to the Arabian arms.

To maintain obedience among those subjected to his rule, and thereby promote the success of his further undertakings, Muza gathered numerous forces from Syria and Egypt, as he did from Barca, Carthagena the Ancient, and the Land of Barbary. With these troops he brought all the tribes who

* A.D. 697.

ventured to oppose him to subjection, and conquering the warlike nations who dwelt in Dara, Sahra, and Tafilet, he reduced them also to his rule.

But fearing lest these tribes might be subsequently excited to rebellion by those of Sûs, and might in that case be assisted by the tribes of the desert, Muza sent his son Abdelaziz, with 10,000 horse, to maintain the frontier, and preserve peace along the line of the same. Abdelaziz Ben Muza was in the flower of his age, but though young he was of a mild and thoughtful character. He was sufficiently prudent notwithstanding the tenderness of his years, but possessed of much resolution also: thus by suavity and persuasion, enforced, whenever needful, by personal bravery, of which he gave ample proof, Abdelaziz succeeded in obtaining the mastery over all, and subdued those barbarous and warlike tribes to entire obedience.

CHAP. VII.—THE EMPIRE OF THE CALIPH WALID BEN ABDELMELIC.

IN the 86th year of the Hegira died the Caliph Abdelmelic Ben Meruan, and was succeeded in the empire by his son, Walid Ben Abdelmelic, who confirmed Muza Ben Noseir in the command of the African forces, and in the government of the country.

The Caliph Walid was called Abulabas; the name of his mother was Abbasia; she was the daughter of Alabas. The reign of this Caliph was one of those most prosperous for the Moslemah, seeing that in his time they made great conquests in Greece and Mawaralnahar. His brother Muslema, and his nephew Coteibo, the son of Muslema, made successful incursions against the Turks in Sogda, Fergana, Bochara, and Pagras. Coteibo took possession of Samarcand, and burnt the idols there worshipped, which were adorned with radiant needles or spikes of gold. He then made peace with the masters of the place, and evacuated the city on condition that they should pay a yearly tribute of 1000 millares of doblas. From another side, Muhamed El Tsafiki entered India and the country of Scinde, where he conquered the King Daharo, whom the Moslemah beheaded.

In the 86th year of the Hegira it was that the Caliph Walid commanded to build the great Aljama of Damascus, and as the ground on which there stood a Christian church was required for that purpose, he gave orders that a certain sum should be paid to the Christians for the building. But the latter refused to accept the price, and would not resign their church; whereupon the Caliph commanded that it should be razed to the ground, and would then give them nothing whatever. 12,000 stone-cutters were employed on the building of that great edifice, but it was not finished in the time of Walid, and remained to be completed in that of Suleiman his brother.

The Caliph Walid sent his brother Abdallâh to assume the government of Egypt, and this Abdallah imposed the tribute of a Dinar* on the Monks. This was the first tribute paid by the Monks.

The Wali Muza Ben Noseir, and his son Abdelaziz, were meanwhile continuing their wars in Almagreb with the most brilliant success. The innumerable tribes of Barbary, all well mounted, and eager in the defence of their liberty, were gradually brought into subjection. The two leaders had determined to free the country from the presence of these troublesome and always turbulent Tribes, and although they found the work slow of accomplishment, yet having overcome the principal Kabilas, they did at length bring the matter to bear. After a long and obstinate struggle, more particularly with those of the tribe Zeneta, they finally came to an understanding with the men of that Kabila, and made a peaceful conclusion of the war. From the Moorish tribes of Masmuda, Zanhaga, Ketama, and Hoara, which were the most ancient and most numerous of the earth, Muza took hostages: both himself and his son constantly proved themselves mild and merciful to those who submitted to their rule, affording them aid against all who would do them wrong, and defending them against the incursions of such insurgent tribes as they had not yet subjugated. In this manner they won the very souls of those barbarous people.

* Dinar, a gold piece divided into 20 dirhems, or pieces of silver.—*Condé.*

Muza now sent his son Meruan to the land of Tanja,* there to maintain the frontier, and he placed in the city a strong garrison of 10,000 men, all Arabs and Egyptians, under the command of the Captain Taric Ben Zeyad, El Nefici, who possessed his utmost confidence: with these troops El Nefici overran all the land of Algarbe up to the sources of the river Mohuya and to the mountains of Aldaren.

Now the Wali Muza laboured with ardent zeal to instruct the tribes whom he had subdued in the Alcoranic law, which they did in effect embrace without reluctance; for such was the will of God, by whose goodness it was that they were thus delivered from their ignorance and barbarism. The faith was in like manner received by many infidel Christians who dwelt in Agile, Tetewan, and Tanja; but many others passed into Spain, thereby losing all their possessions, according to the conventions agreed on at the surrender of the respective cities. In a few years, therefore, all that land of Almagreb was rendered subject and tributary, remaining without the desire or hope of a better fate.

After the death of Abdallah Wali of Egypt, the Caliph Walid appointed Corraho Ben Xaric to the government of that country; but this man Corraho was avaricious and cruel, wherefore the rule of that tyrannical governor endured but a short time,—to the great relief of the people, whom he oppressed and outraged inhumanly. In Africa, on the contrary, the inhabitants blessed the justice and moderation of Muza Ben Noseir and of his son Abdelaziz, who also held command in a widely-extended region.

The tribes of Barbary had now for the most part embraced Islam, and being of a disposition naturally warlike and restless, they willingly adopted the mode of life of the Arabs, not desiring any other occupation than that of war. The pacific dwellers in the towns and villages, with those of the fields, contributed to their support from their fruits and flocks; they furthermore supplied the armies with beautiful horses, whose flight was as that of eagles across those widely-spreading deserts.

* Tanja, the ancient Tingis, which we call Tangier.—*Condé.*

CHAP. VIII.—Proposals for passing into Spain, and determination to that effect.

At this time, certain Christians of Gesira Alandalus, which is the Peninsula of Spain, offended by their King Ruderic,* who was lord of all Spain, from the Narbonese Gaul even to Mauritania, or the land of Tanja, came to Muza Ben Noseir, and incited him to pass into Spain, which is separated from Africa by a strait of the sea called Alzacaue, or the Narrow Waters. They represented to him that the undertaking would be free from danger and easy of execution, and offered to aid him therein with all their forces—such was the immoderate desire of vengeance by which these men were moved.

Now Muza was ambitious and enterprising; but he was prudent as well as a lover of glory, and although he did not reject the proposals thus made to him, he dissembled with those Christians for some time, saying but little in regard to the ultimate intentions which their words had caused him to form. He secretly obtained information, meanwhile, respecting the condition of Spain, its people, the soil and quality of the country, the divisions and mode of government, the power of the king, and the extent of the factions and dissensions then existing among the nobles. We find related on this point that one of the principal Christians of Tanja informed him with much truth and accuracy of all that he required to know on that subject,—made known to him the state of the people, the injudicious government of King Ruderic, his defective mode of administering justice,

* The affront here alluded to is without doubt that caused by the amours of the King Don Roderick with that daughter of Count Julian whom certain writers call the Caba, as we find related in the Chronicon General, written by order of King Alfonso the Wise. The names of "Caba," of her waiting-damsel "Alifa," and of all who appear in this account, prove that the whole story was but a Moorish fiction founded on the legends and ballads current among the Christians and Moors.—*Condé.*

and the fact that for these causes he was but little respected by the nation he ruled, by which he was in effect considered as the wrongful usurper of the crown of the Goths.

The disposition of Musa for undertaking the conquest of Spain was furthermore excited by the tempting description given of the country by the inhabitants of Tanja, and other Africans who had travelled so far. They spoke of its delicious climate, its clear and serene skies, its inexhaustible riches, the fine quality and admirable virtues of its plants and fruits, the constant excellence of the weather at all seasons, its opportune rains, falling ever when most required: the rich abundance of its rivers and copious springs were also insisted on, with the magnificent remains of its ancient monuments, its vast provinces, its numerous towns, and the extraordinary magnificence of many among its principal cities. The General was assured, in short, that the beauties of Spain could not be adequately described or expressed in the most elegant discourse; nor did these his informants deceive him, seeing that in the amount of its advantages there is no country that can be said to surpass the land of Spain; since in the comparison of excellence she must be allowed to stand superior to all, whether of the east or west. The eulogists further added that in its fruitfulness and serenity of sky Spain is favoured as is Syria; in its climate happy as Yemen or Arabia Felix; wealthy as India in its perfumes and flowers; as Hegiaz in its fruits and riches of production; supplied abundantly as Catay or Chinay in its precious and abundant mines; and as Adena in the convenience and utility of its coasts. This enumeration they completed by citing the various cities in which remained monuments of the ancient kings, and of those Ionians whose wisdom and knowledge had ever been acknowledged by the whole world; relics of their works being yet amply existent in Spain, as these men did not fail to affirm. They instanced the great statue of Hercules in Gezira of Cadiz, and the Idol of Gallicia, with the vast Ruins of Merida and Tarragona, of which the like have never been seen in any other region.

Moved by all these persuasions, and incited by the hope of so rich and glorious a conquest, Muza could no

longer resist the allurements held out to him. He wrote to the Caliph, setting forth the importance of the undertaking; he reminded the monarch that with the help of God he had subdued and rendered tributary the Zenetes, and other tribes of Barbary, as those of Zâb and Derar,—of Sahra, Mazamuda, and Sûs; he bade the Caliph remember that his conquering Moslemah had raised the banners of Islam on all the towers of Tanja; and furthermore remarked that from the City of Tanja there was but a strait of twelve miles to the coasts of Andalusia; adding, that with his sovereign's permission, he would send the conquerors of Africa into Spain, for the purpose of bearing to that land the knowledge of God and of the Alcoranic law.

The Caliph applauded his purpose, and the rather as the proposed attempt was in perfect harmony with the traditions held by the messengers of God, which promised them the extension of the law, even to the uttermost confines of the west. It was, therefore, with the most undoubting confidence in the good fortune to attend his arms, that the monarch commissioned his General to proceed in the proposed undertaking.

CHAP. IX.—TARIC CROSSES INTO SPAIN.

HAVING the permission of the Caliph, Muza Ben Noseir commanded that the general Taric Ben Zeyad, a captain of great renown, should debark on the opposite coast of Andalusia, with a select body of cavalry, to reconnoitre the country, and ascertain the truth of what he had been told by the Christian of Tanja. With the help and counsel of this latter, therefore, Taric embarked, having with him five hundred horses, in four large barks, proceeding from Tanja to the centre of Sebta, and thence to Andalusia.* The passage was made successfully; and in the company of

* This first incursion, or reconnoissance, which Taric made in Spain, took place in the year of the Hegira 91 (A.D. 710); but the MS. of Edobi having been much injured in this part of the history, does not mention it, and gives the year 92 as the date of the first landing, which has led his numerous copyists into error.—*Condé.*

Taric there went, together with other noble captains and leaders, Abdelmelic El Moaferi of Wasit, who subsequently established himself in Gezira Alhadra, Almondar Ben Measemai of Hemesa, and Zaid Ben Kesid El Sekseki. These valiant Moslemah overran the whole coast of Andalusia, taking captive the people, and carrying off their flocks, without meeting any who could oppose them. After this success, and bearing their booty with them in their ships, they returned to Tanja, where they were received with universal rejoicing. This took place in the Moon of Ramazan, in the year of the Hegira 91.

The Wali Muza did not fail to consider this first success as a happy presage of the future fortunes of his arms in Spain; he therefore commenced his preparations with infinite rapidity and zeal, giving orders for the construction of the barks needful to the transport of a powerful army; the conduct of which he confided to the leader Taric Ben Zeyad, whose command in the garrison of Tanja he gave to his own son, Meruan Ben Muza.

And now there was not an Arab who did not desire to take part in this expedition, which set sail when all had been fully prepared: crossing the Strait without accident, Taric disembarked at Gezira Alhadra, or the Green Island;* the situation of which favoured the landing of the troops. The Christians did indeed oppose some resistance to the debarkation, but were quickly beaten, and retired in terror and dismay. Taric now fortified himself with his people on a hill at the extremity of Gezira Alhadra, which from that time, and in his honour, was called Gebal Taric, or the Mount of Taric;† but it is also called the Mount of Victory, or the Portal or Entrance, seeing that at this point the way was happily opened to our conquest of Spain. This arrival took place on a Tuesday, the fifth day of the Moon of Regib, in the year 92; and Xerif Edris affirms that

* At this time there were two small islands near the shore, and opposite the present city of Algesiras, whose verdant colour obtained for them the name of the Green Isles. They are now almost entirely covered by the sea. The smallest, of which a portion still remains, is called the Isle of Doves (Las Palomas).

† The modern Gibraltar.

Taric burnt his ships, to deprive his troops of all hope of flight.

The passage from the Green Island to the main land was at first defended by seventeen hundred Christians, under the command of Tadmir,* who was one of King Roderic's most distinguished knights; and with these forces the Arab troops had some few skirmishes during the first three days; but after that time, the Spaniards having been more than once vanquished and put to flight, no longer dared to present themselves before the Moslemah.

We find it related that Tadmir then wrote to King Roderic, demanding succours, and saying: "My Lord,—There have come forces adverse to us from parts of Africa. Whether they have dropped from heaven, or sprung up through the earth, I know not, having found them suddenly before me, and encountered them on my path. I resisted them with all my power, and did my utmost to maintain the passage, but have been compelled to yield to their numbers and the impetuosity of their attacks; wherefore they have finally encamped on our soil, in despite of my efforts. And now, my Lord, since the matter is thus, I entreat you to succour us with all speed, and with the largest force you can muster. Come yourself, also, in person, for that will be better than all."

This unexpected intelligence filled King Roderic with terror. He commanded to summon his counsellors and leaders of war; and despatched the flower of the Gothic cavalry to announce his own approach. The host departed promptly. It joined that under the command of Tadmir, and advanced against the Moslemah. There then ensued many and sanguinary skirmishes between the opposing forces, but always to the notable injury and heavy loss of the Goths.

The vanguard of the Moslemah cavalry was commanded by Mugueiz El Rumi, a renowned captain who had distinguished himself in the battles and conquest of Africa. Roderic, meanwhile, assembled his people from every province of the land, and came against the Moslemah with all his power; but Taric Ben Zeyad lost not a moment:

* Theodomir.

ravaging the country of Algezira and Sidonia, he penetrated even to the shores of the Guadiana, infusing terror and dismay into the souls of the people, who had neither time nor heart to defend themselves. On every side were seen troops of Moslemah cavalry: and these, hurrying rapidly in all directions, destroyed the towns, dispersed the inhabitants, and carried off or burnt all the fruits of the fields.

CHAP. X.—THE BATTLE OF GUADALETE.

RODERIC arrived on the plains of Sidonia with an army of 90,000 men, and was accompanied by all the nobles of his kingdom; yet Taric was not intimidated by this numerous host, which appeared to him but as an agitated sea; for he knew that if his Moslemah were inferior in point of numbers, they possessed the advantage in valour, in the quality of their arms, and in the dexterity with which they used them. It is true that the first and last ranks of the Christians were armed in coats of mail and cuirasses of proof, but the remainder of the force was without this defence. Yet they, too, were in part provided with lances, shields, and swords; while in other parts they were lightly armed with bows and arrows, slings, and other weapons, each according to the fashion of his country,—some having short scythes, clubs, or battle-axes only.

The Moslemah leaders thereupon assembled their scattered bands, and recalled the divisions of their flying cavalry; when, all being united, Taric arranged his forces, prepared them for the struggle, and, full of confidence, stood ready to give the Christians battle.

The opposing hosts first found themselves face to face on the plain traversed by the Guadalete; the day was Sunday,* and there still remained two days of the moon of Ramazan.

* The 26th of July; A.D. 711, that is to say. This date has been much disputed; Mariana, Ferreras, and other historians, having been led into error by the fact before alluded to of Archbishop Roderick's having taken the years of the Hegira for solar years. But Pagi and our own Gibbon have adopted the date given by our author, who follows the best Arabic authorities.—TR.

The earth trembled under the tramp of the forces, and the air resounded with the clash of trumpets, the thunder of drums, the roar of a thousand other instruments, and the mingled outcries of that vast multitude composing both the hosts. They met with equal bravery and resolution, although with much disparity of numbers, since the Christians had four men for each one of the Moslemah. The battle commenced with the dawn of day, and was maintained on both sides with equal constancy, but without advantage for either part. That carnage thus continued till the arrival of night compelled the combatants to give a truce to its sanguinary horrors. Both hosts passed the hours of darkness on the field of battle, and waited impatiently the arrival of dawn to renew the murderous conflict; and when the first light appeared in the east they recommenced the struggle, yet still with but the same results; nothing decisive was gained on either side, and with the arrival of darkness only did the slaughter cease.

On the third morning of the cruel strife, Taric observed that the Moslemah began to lose heart, and were yielding ground to the Christians; wherefore, riding through the ranks of his people, he rose aloft in his stirrups and addressed them as follows:—"O Moslemah, conquerors of Almagreb! whither tend your steps? to what end your unworthy and inconsiderate flight? The enemies are before you, but behind you is the sea; there is no help for you save in your own valour and the aid of God. On, therefore, Warriors and Moslemah! on! Do as you see your leader show you the example." Saying these words, he spurred his horse directly forwards, cut down all before him to right and left, and so forced his way up to the Christian banners. Here Taric recognised the king by his decorations and the horse he rode; wherefore, transpiercing him with his lance, the unhappy Roderic fell dead, for so did God destroy him by the hand of Taric; and thus did he bring aid to the Moslemah. The troops of the Faith then cut down all before them, according to the example of their leader, and the Christians, seeing their monarch, with many other of their principal captains, lying dead, fell into disorder and fled terrified from the field. The Arabs followed up their victory—they pursued the fugitives, and the swords of the Moslemah cavalry drank deep

of Christian blood in places far and wide from the plains whereon the battle had been fought: nay, there were so many slaughtered, that God, who created them, can alone recount their numbers. Thus did the battle conclude: the victory of Guadalete was gained on the fifth day of the moon of Xawal, and that district remained covered with the bones of the dead for a very long space of time thereafter.

Taric took the head of King Roderic, and sent it to Muza Ben Noseir, giving him intelligence of his various successes, as well at the passing of Alzacauc as in the victories that followed, relating at length the sanguinary and perilous battle of Guadalete, wherein he had overcome all the power of the King of the Goths, and had dispersed his immense army.

In this relation Taric described to Muza how on the first day King Roderic entered into the battle, seated in a chariot of war, adorned with ivory ornaments, and drawn by two large white mules. On his head he wore a crown or diadem of pearls, while a rich chlamys, or mantle of purple, bordered with embroidery of gold, was the covering of his shoulders. He proceeded to relate how on the third day God had given a complete victory to his Moslemah in that sanguinary fight, when he, Taric, had slain King Roderic with his own hand, and now sent to Muza the head of that sovereign. He added the names of such among his followers as had most distinguished themselves in the battle, and told how they had pursued the fugitives for three days following that of the victory, without lifting their swords from the necks of the vanquished, or giving them the much-needed rest.

The officer who was charged with these news to the Wali Muza, gave him the letters of Taric, and subsequently related the details in form of speech, describing the passage of the Strait, whereby the forces had reached the soil of Spain; how they had disembarked in Gezira Alhadra, and in despite of the Christian resistance had gained possession of the great mount of Gebel Alfeth, which was now called Gebel Taric, from the name of that illustrious general, who had there conquered the defenders of the passage and the mount, although they were the hope of the Christian force.

He furthermore spoke of the demand for succours made by Tadmir, general of King Roderic, and how that monarch had come himself to his aid with 90,000 men; how Taric had gone forth against them, the advanced guard of the Moslemah cavalry being commanded by Mugueiz El Rumi, the servant of Walid; how the fight was maintained for three days by both armies; and how, on the third, Taric seeing the numbers still remaining of the enemy, and that his own troops were losing ground, had exhorted them from his horse, and had encouraged them to struggle valiantly, and be ready to die as good Moslemah should ever do: how he had then promised them great rewards, and finally had exclaimed, "Where hope you to find refuge? behind you rolls the impassable sea, before you is the wearied foe. There is no resource for us but in our valour; do as I do, Guala!* I will now fall upon yon king, and if I cannot take his life you shall see me die beneath his hands."

The messenger further told how Taric then seated himself firmly on his horse, and breaking the ranks of the enemy had recognised Roderic by the ornaments of his dignity and the steed he bestrode. He added that the General had done as he had said, and how God had slain Roderic by his hand, when the Moslemah made a cruel slaughter of their enemies, not losing any very great numbers of their own troops, while the Christians, flying in disorder, were pursued by the faithful during three entire days. The orator concluded by relating that Taric had commanded to cut off the head of Roderic, and had sent it to Muza.

These details were heard with much pleasure by the Wali, who said that he would send the head of King Roderic to the Caliph Walid. Such are the misfortunes that may happen to monarchs when they take a conspicuous place in the midst of the battle!

* A phrase of asseveration equivalent to "so may God help me:" it is used either to affirm or deny, but always to give force to previous assertions.—*Condé.*

CHAP. XI.—Of the arrival of Muza in Spain, and the conquests of Taric in Andalusia.

But the Wali Muza now became envious of the glories of his general, Taric, and in his secret mind he did not do him all the justice which his services so well merited. He wrote immediately, commanding that Taric should proceed no farther, and desired him to await his orders where he then was, nor attempt to pursue so important a work as that before them until he had a greater force, and could proceed in security. At the same time Muza sent letters to the Caliph Walid, giving him an account of the victories obtained in Spain, and declaring that the battles had been terrible as the Day of Judgment. He likewise sent to the Caliph the embalmed head of King Roderic; but in these letters Muza attributed to himself all the successes of that fortunate expedition.

Without delay the Wali then set his affairs in Africa in good order, gathered troops, the number of which is computed at 10,000 horse and 8,000 foot, appointed his son Abdelaziz to remain at Cairvan and conduct the government of Africa in his place; and in the Moon of Regeb, in the year 93, Muza passed the strait of the sea and landed in Spain, accompanied by his sons Abdelola and Meruan, from whom at a later period the great palace which rises on the bank of the river to the west of Cordova took its name.*

Together with Muza there landed in Spain many of the noblest Arabians of the Tribe of Coraix, and others of high condition; as, for example, Almonazir, Aly Ben Rebie, Lahmi, Hayut Ben Reja Temami, and Hanâs Ben Abdallah Asenani, who subsequently founded the great Aljama of Saracusta.

Taric, with his conquering Moslemah, was meanwhile

* The Arabic writers are not agreed as to the time of Muza's arrival in Spain, which El Ifriki declares did not take place until four months had elapsed from the death of Don Roderic.—*Condé.*

encamped in Andalusia, and made incursions in every direction, filling the dwellers of the land with dismay. When the letters of Muza unexpectedly arrived, commanding the victorious general to proceed no further until he should be joined by the Wali himself, Taric at once took counsel with his principal captains, and all expressed the displeasure they felt at so inopportune a command. How, indeed, was it possible, they enquired, to refrain from availing themselves of an occasion so favourable. Their General well understood whence this order proceeded; but, without permitting it to be seen that he had penetrated the envious motives of Muza Ben Noseir, he bade his officers consider what it was proper that they should do in so important a question. All agreed in thinking that it was not advisable to lose an occcasion so precious; and among the rest there spoke Julian the Christian, who advised Taric to the following effect:—"Since thou hast conquered the great army of the Goths, and now that the principal of the Christian nobles who came up with their king to the battle of the Guadalete are broken and dispersed, thou shouldstby no means lose these precious moments, while the Christians still carry the terror of thy arms in their souls; on the contrary, do thou follow without giving them time or place wherein to take rest; for when they have once recovered themselves, it will be easy for them to gather new forces, as well as to re-assemble and reanimate the now discouraged troops whom thou hast scattered. Hasten, therefore, to penetrate into the provinces, and occupy the chief cities without delay; for if thou canst make thyself master of them, but more especially of the capital, thou wilt then have nothing to fear."

These reasonings appeared excellent to all, and every one enforced them on Taric to the best of his ability; whereupon he, desiring no better, gave orders accordingly, and made the necessary distribution of the troops. He passed his whole army in review, praised the valour of the soldiers as shown in the past, and exhorted them to new proofs of zeal. He commanded that none should offer offence to the peaceable and unarmed inhabitants, and should attack only such as bore arms, or who took part in the defence of the country by aiding those who did so; he forbade all plunder save only

on the field of battle or in the taking of such towns as were occupied by force of arms. He divided his force into three bodies. The first he confided to Mugueiz El Rumi, whom he despatched to Cordova; the second he gave in charge to Zayde Ben Kesadi El Sekseki, commanding him to proceed to the province of Malaga; and with the third, which he led himself, he departed for the interior of the kingdom, passing by the district of Jayen to Tolaitola,* which was the capital of the kings of Spain. Before Taric reached that city, he was joined, as had been concerted, by the division of Kesadi, who had encountered resistance at Estija, but the Moslemah had nevertheless defeated the Christians, even before the walls of the city, and the terrified inhabitants had submitted to pay tribute. The General had then taken hostages from among the principal of their inhabitants, and that done, had continued his march with his force to join that of Taric. The cities of Malaga and Elvira had both followed the example given them by Estija.

Before Cordova, an important and very ancient city, Mugueiz El Rumi had meanwhile encamped his troops, and sent messengers to the inhabitants, exhorting them to surrender on such terms and guarantees as it was the custom of Islam to offer, assuring them that once subjected to tribute they were secure in their persons and possessions; he declared moreover that while the tribute was light and easy, the rage and fury of his conquering troops were terrible as the whirlwind; wherefore he recommended the people not to embolden themselves to resistance by vain hopes, since they could not reasonably look for succour from any side, seeing that all were now in the hands of the conqueror, and he exhorted them to save themselves, as many other cities had done, by confiding their fate to the generosity of the Arab leaders: thus redeeming at small cost the otherwise inevitable flow of their blood.

The people of Cordova would not give ear to these proposals, deceived by the assurance which they derived from the

* It is thus that the Arabs corrupted the name of Toledo, from hearing the Christians speak of it as Urbs Toletana. In like manner they made *Saracusta*, from Cæsaraugusta (Saragossa); while they called Seville, Spali; Ecija, Estija, &c.—*Condé*.

presence of a few troops, the remains of the Battle of Guadalete,* who had taken refuge in their city, and now expressed their confidence in her capabilities of defence: they consequently rejected all offers of accommodation. But to what purpose the walls in which they trusted, and what could the valour of their soldiers avail them, when Fortune had declared against them? Mugueiz, informed of the weakness of the garrison, and learning that the walls were accessible on the part towards the river, took advantage of the darkness on a certain rainy night, and swimming the stream with 1000 horsemen, each of whom bore a foot-soldier behind him, he gained that side of the town walls with all silence and care. Then, cutting down the guards at that gate, he forced an entrance for the thousand horse, and thus facilitated the arrival of a great part of his army, which before the light appeared had obtained possession of the city. The Governor, with 400 men, retired to a church, in which he fortified himself; but the inhabitants implored the clemency of the conqueror, Mugueiz El Rumi, and placed themselves under the protection of the Arabs.

The General now sent a body of men to attack the church; but the Christians defended themselves therein with obstinate bravery, until the last man of the 400 died fighting. The city was then subjected to what was called the tribute of blood, which was a much heavier sum than the ordinary tribute. Mugueiz likewise took hostages of all such as he chose among the citizens; and leaving the city in a state of quiet, after he had committed the government thereof to some of the chief inhabitants, he departed with his force to subjugate the towns of the surrounding district, desiring to maintain the terror now excited in all parts by the invasion. And in effect the Christians were amazed and confounded at the lightness and rapidity, as well as at the valour of the Arab forces, who seemed to appear at one and the same time in different and widely distant provinces.

* As the Arabs were in the frequent habit of adding the word Medena, "City," to the name of each town, so did they prefix the word Guard, "River," to that of each river. Thence we have, Guard-alete, Guard-iana, Guard el Quiber, &c. of which the moderns make Guadalquiver, Guadiana, &c.—Tr.

CHAP. XII.—Of the conquest of Toledo and its territories.

When Taric arrived at the city Tolaitola, the capital of Spain, a strong and ancient town, almost surrounded by the river Tagus, the fame of his rapid and uninterrupted victories had preceded him. The terrors exhibited by the melancholy remains of the ruined army of King Roderic gave a yet more exalted idea of the Arab valour, while the number of the forces, the lightness of the cavalry, and the bravery of the troops, were described in terms that much surpassed the truth. The principal nobles who had followed the Christian king to battle had died in the fight, or were now wandering fugitives; those who had remained in the city, hearing that the Moslemah were directing their steps thitherward, had taken flight with their families, insomuch that there remained few persons of importance, and scarcely any men of war, within the place.

The position of the town and its citadel is nevertheless so strong, being raised on a high rock and surrounded by a wide river, that this might have given to its inhabitants some confidence in their ability to defend themselves; but they lacked courage, intelligence, and knowledge of warlike affairs: thus, at the end of a few days, finding themselves ill provided with munitions of all kinds, and having no hope of succours from without, they came forth to treat of conditions with Taric, who received them with a firm and serious aspect, but not unkindly.

Their surrender was accepted on the following conditions. They engaged to give up all the horses and arms that should be found in the city; all who did not think proper to remain therein being allowed to depart freely, but with the loss of their possessions; while those who consented to retain their dwellings were assured of the security and inviolability of all they possessed, whereof they remained absolute masters. Every inhabitant was permitted to enjoy the exercise of his religious faith with the use of the

churches, which were carefully preserved, while he was but subjected in return to a very light tribute. The only restriction laid on the conquered people in respect of their religion was that they were forbidden to build additional churches without having first obtained permission from the Governor, nor were they suffered to make public processions. They were allowed to govern themselves by their own laws and judges, but were not permitted to punish or otherwise impede any who should desire to become Moslemah. Agreeing to these conditions, the people of the city resigned their arms and gave hostages, when the Arab leaders with a certain number of troops entered the gates and took up their quarters in Medina Toledo.

Taric Ben Zeyad himself then occupied with his guard the Alcazar* of the king, which was situate on a height rising over the Tagus. The Palace was large and of wonderfully beautiful construction; very much treasure, and precious works innumerable, are declared to have been found therein. Among these, and in a remote apartment of the Alcazar, there were discovered five and twenty crowns of gold, each adorned with jacinths and other stones of price; since it was the custom among these people that after the death of every king who had reigned in the country, his crown should be deposited in that chamber: each diadem had the name of its wearer written thereon, with his age, and the number of years he had borne the same. Twenty and five, therefore, had been the number of the Gothic kings of Spain, down to the period of this conquest.

CHAP. XIII.—Of the conquest of Merida, and the arrival of Abdelaziz in Spain.

When the Wali Muza Ben Noseir disembarked with his army on the coast of Algarbe in Andalusia, he was at once informed that Taric had continued the conquest in contra-

* Palace.

vention of his commands, and, filled with rage against him, he resolved in his heart to accomplish that general's ruin. Enquiring the way that Taric had pursued, Muza found among the Christians faithful guides who put him on the track, and in no case deceived or were perfidious towards him. "When Providence places in thy hand the leading rein of felicity, all creatures concur to render thee happy; even thy enemies assist thee, and should any difficulty oppose thee Fortune takes care to remove it and to make thy path clear."

Muza now determined to pursue the conquest of the country by parts wherein Taric had not appeared; he overran the territory of Esbilia in a series of rapid marches, remaining in the district and before that city for the space of a month.*

The place then submitting to his conditions and accepting the rule of Islam, Muza took hostages to his full content, and left as governor of the town his general, Isû Ben Abdallah El Towail, of Medina, with a garrison proportioned to the number of the inhabitants, and also for the security of the sick Moslemah whom he was leaving there. He then continued his march, and occupied the city of Carmuna on his way; for although that place was very strong, as well by its position as by its ancient walls, the garrison surrendered nevertheless, therein following the example of Esbilia and other cities of Andalusia.

The force of Muza consisted principally of 18,000 cavalry; he had very few foot-soldiers, seeing that he had gradually left these in the cities through which he had passed, partly as a mark of confidence in return for the hostages he had taken, but partly also to restrain the more turbulent among the people of those cities.

Not encountering resistance any where, Muza became incited and inflamed by the desire of new conquests. Andalusia appeared to him but a narrow field; wherefore he passed

* Where Taric had also appeared some time previously, but he had not made a long stay; and on his departure the inhabitants commenced the erection of a series of fortifications, assisted by which they hoped to defend themselves.—*Condé.*

into Lusitania, which is the Algarve* of Spain. As he approached the cities of Sibla, Assonoba, Myrtilis, Beza, and others, he found each ready to surrender, and the Wali arrived at the great city of Merida† without giving battle.

When Muza beheld that magnificent place he said to his generals, "It would seem that all men have united their knowledge and power to aggrandize and enrich this city; happy shall he be who succeeds in making himself master thereof!" He then sent to the inhabitants the usual summons to surrender; but the men of the place, confiding in their high walls and strong towers, returned a haughty reply, and sallied forth to prevent the Arabs from encamping before their town; but they were soon repulsed and compelled to retire within their walls.

Muza then, perceiving that the place was large and wonderfully strong, made a careful examination of the defences, and being convinced that to make himself sure of its conquest would require considerable time, he sent messengers to summon his son Abdelaziz to his aid, bidding him come speedily, and with all the force that he could muster, to the end that his approach might inspire terror into the whole district, and render the fall of the place the more secure. Meanwhile there ensued obstinate combats almost daily before the gates of the city, the inhabitants whereof came forth to encounter the Moslemah with much bravery; and although they were often compelled to retreat to their walls in very evil plight, yet they defended themselves obstinately within them, and caused much loss to the besiegers.

Now Muza had remarked that at a certain distance from Merida there was a vast cave hewn in the rock, and in this he concealed by night a large force both of horse and foot, wherewith he prepared to give a surprise to the defenders of

* The Arabs called the western part of a country its "Algarve," as they did the East the "Axarquia," the North "Algufia," and the South "Alkibla." They called the west Almagreb also, that being the name which they gave to the hour of sunset; but this name would seem to have been confined to the Algarve or west of Africa.—*Condé.*

† The Emerita Augusta of the Romans, the ruins of whose city still show traces of ancient grandeur.—TR.

the town. At the hour of dawn he proceeded from his camp, as was his wont, to attack the walls; and the Christians on their parts, now become accustomed to his assaults, sallied forth, in the hope of rendering his efforts vain. Muza then commanded the Moslemah to commence a well-feigned retreat; and the people of the besieged town pursued the seeming fugitives even to the place of their ambush. Eagerly engaged in the fight, and anxious to follow up the advantage which they believed themselves to have obtained, the Christians continued their combat with the Moslemah till they had unwittingly got beyond the spot where the latter were lying in ambush. But they had no sooner done so than the concealed troops poured forth impetuously, with loud cries; when the pretended fugitives turning round, at once presented a bold front to their pursuers, and an obstinate struggle ensued. The Christians fought through long hours, and with desperate valour, but were at length effectually cut to pieces, very few escaping to the city. Yet the slain had sold their lives dearly; and very heavy was the loss sustained by our Moslemah also. Thenceforward the inhabitants no longer dared to come out for battle with the besiegers.

Now, in one of their assaults on Merida, the Arabs had gained possession of a strong tower in the vicinity of the place, which the Christians laboured to take from them; and the latter fought with such determined courage, that not one of the valiant Moslemah who had entered therein escaped with life. The Arabs saw themselves compelled to resign it therefore, the carnage having been such that they subsequently called that tower Borg-Axuhuda—The Tower of the Martyrs.

At this time Abdelaziz arrived from Barbary with 7,000 African horse and a large body of cross-bow men: wherefore when the people of the city saw that the camp of the Arabs was filled with new troops, while on their part they were not only suffering a scarcity of men of war, but also of provisions, and could not see hope of succour from any part, they began to bethink themselves of surrender, and the rather as the inferior classes had long been murmuring, and demanded that the enemy should be admitted within their walls. The

principal among the inhabitants took counsel therefore, and determined to send messengers to the Mosleman leader, even Muza Ben Noseir, demanding peace. Being brought to his pavilion and introduced to his presence, the emissaries beheld a venerable personage with a long white beard, to whom they made the proposals wherewith they were charged; when Muza promised to grant them conditions more favourable than their resistance had merited,—commanding them to come the next day at the same hour to receive his ultimate reply. In the evening the Wali agreed with his generals on the conditions to be accorded to the city; but that night Muza dyed his beard to a deep brown; and when the messengers and envoys of Merida returned the next day, they could scarcely believe they saw the same person,—marvelling much at the black beard with a certain tinge of red which he then exhibited. The Wali declared his conditions, and the envoys returned to the city, saying to the people: "You are here fighting with men who can change their age to youth at their pleasure. This it is that we have seen their King do; we have beheld him become as a youth to-day whom we saw to be an old man yesterday; wherefore arise and make ready to grant all these men require, that your safety may be assured." The conditions were accordingly agreed to, the people of Merida resigning their horses and arms, as also the possessions of all who had fled to Gallicia, with those of such as had died in the ambuscade. The citizens who desired to depart were free to do so, but with the loss of all their goods. The treasures and riches of the churches, moreover, were adjudged to the conquerors; and hostages to the satisfaction of the Moslemah were likewise demanded; but these conditions complied with, the inhabitants were assured of the safety of life and possessions.

The city then opened its gates; and Muza Ben Noseir entered Merida on the day of Alfitra,* in the beginning of the Moon Xawal of the year 93. Much did he marvel at the vast extent of the place, and at the splendour of its edifices. He demanded for his hostages the young men of the best families in Merida, with the Gothic queen,

* The Easter of the exit of Ramazan.—*Condé.*

wife of King Roderic, and certain other persons of high degree who had sought refuge in that city.

While these events were taking place in Lusitania, Taric was occupied in the territory of Tolaitola, where he garrisoned the fortresses, restored such strong places as had been partially destroyed to more than their previous strength, and employed his troops in the pursuit of the scattered bands dispersed about the province. Some of these companies he came upon in a city among the mountains; but they were presently reduced, seeing that fear now combated on the part of the Moslemah, and there was no leader among the Christians by whom the latter might have been reanimated and encouraged. Thus the remnants of the Christian army fled from point to point, without daring to confide in the safety of either camp or town. The city of the mountains then received the name of the conquering general, and was called the City of Taric.

From this place Taric Ben Zeyad despatched a part of his troops to Tolaitola, while he continued his march with the rest until he reached the Guadilhigiara: having crossed that river, he gained the neighbouring mountains by a valley, which was also named after himself, and received the appellation of Feg-Taric. He likewise occupied another small city, which was situate amidst the mountains; and as among the riches found therein was a precious table profusely adorned with emeralds and jacinths, the place was called Medina Almeida—The City of the Table,—which was said to be the table of Solomon. Taric then pursued his way to Medina Maya, where he also found rich treasures of gold and precious stones: loaded with these and with costly spoils of every kind, he then returned to Tolaitola.*

* The Arabic authors give no precise details respecting the course of Taric's march, which has been the subject of much dispute. Mariana believes Medina Almeida to be Alcalà de Henares; other writers affirm it to be Medina Cœli, but the best authorities believe it to indicate the present Guadalaxara.—Tr.

CHAP. XIV.—Of the arrival of Muza in Toledo, and of the discords between the two leaders.

While Muza Ben Noseir was employed on the siege and conquest of Merida, the populace of Seville, with inconsiderate rashness, suddenly fell upon the Moslemah, who were dwelling therein unarmed, and in the security of good faith, slaughtering more than thirty of the number before they could be brought to order. The remainder contrived to escape from their hands, and finally reached the army of Muza, proceeding through bye-roads, and making their way in the night, as they best could. The Wali instantly commanded his son Abdelaziz to set forth without delay, and proceeding to Seville with a large body of cavalry, there to punish the criminals with great severity.

Now the principal inhabitants of the city had taken no part in this highly imprudent action; and when Abdelaziz appeared they would fain have gone forth and presented themselves to the general, describing the affair as it had occurred, and declaring their innocence of the perfidy committed, but the populace prevented them from doing so; and closing the gates, determined to defend the city to the death. Inspired by an ardent desire for vengeance, the Moslemah troops then fell upon the defences with even more than their usual ardour, and these they presently forced. They then poured into the place; and satiating their blood-thirsty swords with the lives of the populace, they made a fearful carnage amongst them, confounding the innocent with the guilty in their blind rage, and sparing none who came within their reach. It is, indeed, an unhappy truth that the fault of a few has but too often to be expiated by the suffering of many, and so it was in the instance before us. Abdelaziz quickly reduced the city to order; and having informed his father of that result, received the further command of Muza to continue the conquest of Southern Spain.

The affairs of Merida being also regulated, and all things left in peace and security, the Wali departed with his army

towards Tolaitola or Toledo, taking on his passage several cities, all of which surrendered to the conditions he offered, the conqueror declaring that his Arabs had not come to burn their towns, destroy their fields, or despoil them of their wealth; but made war only on such as, being obstinately rebellious, persisted in a vain and useless resistance. In this march the Moslemah found themselves frequently crossing admirable bridges, the works of the ancient Ionians, constructions the magnificence of which they had never seen anything to equal, and which seemed rather to be the work of beneficent genii than of mere men. They were more especially delighted with the elegance and commodious forms of those over the Tagus and the Guadiana.

When Muza arrived at Medina Talbera,* the General Taric, who knew how much the Wali was offended by his successful expeditions, came forth to meet him, not exhibiting any of the fear and mistrust of one who has done wrong, but also without any display of haughtiness or vain presumption: nay, further to conciliate the offended Wali, Taric brought gifts of certain jewels, such as had fallen to himself, as chief leader, in the distribution of the spoils. At Talavera, as aforesaid, he entered the presence of Muza; and when the latter beheld him, he enquired, with much severity of aspect: "Wherefore hast thou neglected to obey my commands?" To this Taric replied, with much submission, that for the more effectual service of the cause of Islam, and in the firm belief that Muza himself, if acquainted with the exact state of circumstances, would have ordered all things as they had been accomplished, he had ventured to disobey. Taric added, that he fully acknowledged himself to be but the creature and work of Muza, whose faithful servant he truly was; saying which, he presented the treasures which had formed his part of the general spoil.

The two generals then proceeded to Medina Toledo in company, the troops encamping without the city, but Muza entering it with Taric and the other leaders, when they at once ascended to the Alcazar. Arrived there, Muza

* Talavera.

enquired in the presence of all where the precious table of Solomon was then to be found; when Taric gave it to him wanting one foot, that being the condition, as he said, in which he had found it. Muza then took the table, and still speaking in the presence of the assembled officers, he informed Taric that to punish him for his disobedience in so grave a matter, and for having confided in the fortune of the Mosleman arms rather than in the prudence and experience of his Wali, he deprived him of that command of the army which he had conferred upon him. Muza concluded his speech by thanking the rest of the leaders for their zeal and valour in the labours of the field, and in the propagation of Islam. All remained silent, Taric only excepted, who replied in these words: "My desire, O Wali! was to serve God and the Caliph. My conscience absolves me; and I hope that our sovereign, to whose justice and protection I appeal, will do the same."

These words of Taric did not soften the heart of the Wali, which was filled with envy; on the contrary, they embittered his anger; and, more than ever enraged, he cast the General into prison, while he wrote letters to the Caliph accusing him of disobedience. Muza confided the command of which he had deprived Ben Zeyad to Mugueiz El Rumi, although this general was the only one who had ventured to speak to him in favour of Taric. He represented to Muza that the exploits and services of the deposed commander were known to all, and in his opinion deserved the most distinguished honours, not reproof and imprisonment. Muza remained, nevertheless, immovable in his determination, and thought of nothing but the accomplishment of the ruin and even the death of Taric Ben Zeyad.

CHAP. XV.—Of the conquests of Abdelaziz in the province of Murcia.

During this time, Abdelaziz, after having pacified and secured the cities of Andalucia, passed on with the host he

commanded to that part of Southern Spain where the general of the Christians, called Tadmir, still maintained the frontier against the Arabs. The Christian leader belonged to one of the chief families among the Goths, and considered himself king of that district, which was called, from his name, the Land of Tadmir.

Now Tadmir (or Theodomir) was a prince of much force of character. He had distinguished himself on various occasions against the Moslemah, and had more particularly given proof of courage and prudence in the battle of Guadalete, where, finding that the Christians were beaten, Theodomir retired, in so much order, with the relics of his force, that he succeeded in delivering them from the swords of the conquerors.

Such was Tadmir Ben Gobdos: when he heard that Abdelaziz Ben Muza was approaching his domains, he went forth to defend the passage with such troops as he could get together; and although he did not dare to risk his diminished forces in the open field, or give battle to Abdelaziz, the encounter of whose cavalry he feared, and with good reason, yet he occupied the mountains and difficult passes with much intelligence, and met the invaders in the defiles and gorges, harassing his outlying parties even in the plains, where he contrived, with his few disheartened followers, to cause no inconsiderable injury to the mighty squadrons of his foe. In this manner, contending with various fortune, Theodomir taught his people by what means they might at least restrain the impetuosity of the Mosleman advance.

Abdelaziz, and his lieutenant Habib, were meanwhile impatient to commence the struggle with the Christians, hand to hand; but Theodomir, availing himself, with infinite dexterity, of his knowledge of the ground, and avoiding the encounter they sought, yet kept them continually on the alert, and not unfrequently appeared among them at points where he was least expected. But despite the cares of Theodomir, the constancy of Abdelaziz prevailed, and he succeeded in compelling the Christians to a battle in the plains near Loxa, when a sanguinary struggle ensued, wherein the latter was totally routed and broken by the

Moslemah, whose cavalry pursued them to the city of Auriola,* the only fortress in which they could find shelter.

Arrived in this place, Theodomir perceived that he had lost nearly all his fighting men; yet, still desiring to make the Moslemah believe he had found a sufficient force to maintain the city, he commanded the women of the place to despoil themselves of their robes, and, assuming the dress of men, to take arms in their hands and ascend to the towers and walls; where they stood forth to the view of the enemy,—having their long hair crossed beneath their chins, to give them the appearance of bearded warriors.

The stratagem of Theodomir succeeded; and the Moslemah, seeing the walls thus numerously manned, disposed themselves around the city with all the precautions of those who believe they have to deal with a large garrison.

Abdelaziz was thus preparing his people for the attack, when a cavalier, sent by Theodomir, was seen to leave the gate and approach the camp. Demanding safe conduct, it was at once accorded him, and being presented to Abdelaziz, who received him very courteously, the messenger demanded peace and security for the city, in Theodomir's name; but adding, that they would be accepted only on conditions worthy of the generosity of the Moslemah generals, and of the nobility of that prince who required them for the good of his people. He then declared that he came authorized to arrange conditions, and to conclude the peace to be there contracted; when the treaty was written without delay, and was in form as follows:—

"Written Contract of Peace between Abdelaziz Ben Muza, Ben Noseir, and Tadmir Ben Gobdos, King of the Land of Tadmir.

"In the name of God, the Clement and Merciful. Abdelaziz and Tadmir make this Treaty of Peace,—may God confirm and protect it. Tadmir shall retain the command over his own people, but over no other people among those of his faith. There shall be no war between his subjects and the Arabs, nor shall the children or women of his people be led captive. They shall not be disturbed in the exercise of their religion: their churches shall not be

* Orihuela.

burnt, nor shall any services be demanded from them, or obligations laid on them,—those expressed in this treaty alone excepted. This convention shall extend its conditions alike over the seven cities called Auriola, Valentila, Lecant,* Mula, Bocsara, Ota, and Lorca. Theodomir shall not receive our enemies, nor fail in fidelity to us, and he shall not conceal whatever hostile purposes he may know to exist against us. His nobles and himself shall pay the tribute of a Dinar or Aureo† each year, with four measures of wheat, and four of barley. Of mead, vinegar, honey, and oil, each four measures. All the vassals of Tadmir, and every man subject to tax, shall pay the half of those imposts.

"This was written on the fourth day of the Moon Regib, in the ninety-fourth year of the Hegira; and the witnesses thereto are, Otzman Ben Abi Abda, Habib Ben Abi Obeida, Edris Ben Maicera, and Abulcasim El Mezeli."

When this treaty was signed, the emissary of the Christians declared and made known that he was himself the Prince Theodomir; and Abdelaziz, gratified by this discovery, applauded his frank and noble proceeding. He paid his guest much honour; and they ate together as men who had long been friends. Tadmir returned to his city that night; and at dawn of the following morning he commanded that all the gates should be thrown open,—himself sallying forth from the principal of them, with all the chief inhabitants of the place, who had assembled around him by the time that the light had fully come, and who then accompanied him to meet the Arab General, even Abdelaziz Ben Noseir, with Hagib, and the other chiefs of the Moslemah commanders, who, with a select body of foot and horse, thereupon entered the city.

Much surprised at seeing so few people in arms, Abdelaziz enquired of Theodomir: "What hast thou done with the troops that manned the walls and towers of thy city?" Whereupon the prince of the Goths described his stratagem, which appeared to all a very well-imagined feint. The Christian prince then entertained his guests nobly during

* Orihuela, Valentina, and Alicante.—*De Marlès.*

† The weight of the Dinar was seventy-two grains of barley. It was of gold, and its value was something less than nine shillings.—*Idem.*

three days; after which Abdelaziz departed, without having suffered that anything should be injured, and forbidding his troops to ravage the neighbouring country.

The Mosleman host next directed its march towards the Sierras of Segura, taking possession of Buzta, Aczi, Jaen, Elvira, and Granada,—in which last city there were large numbers of Jews. The Arabs did not encounter resistance in any part; and occupying Antequera, they also took possession of Medina Malaga, with other towns of the sea coast, being hindered by none.

In this expedition, Abdelaziz was accompanied by the General Otzman Ben Abi Obeida El Carsi, who had ever been the friend and companion of his father Muza Ben Noseir, and had therefore been the first of the Moslemah captains to affix his name to the treaty of peace made with Tadmir Ben Gobdos, the Christian king of Eastern Andalucia. The proper name of this general was Obeida. Abdallah Ben Maicera El Fahemi was likewise in the company of Abdelaziz; and he, who had also confirmed the treaty with his name, was in like manner the friend of Muza Ben Noseir. Habib was his own companion and friend, being the son of another friend of his father Muza; and he too signed the treaty of peace, as did Abulcasim El Mezeli and others of the younger leaders.

Now at this time there came orders for the Caliph to Muza Ben Noseir, commanding him to reinstate the General Taric Ben Zeyad in the command of those troops whom he had so gloriously led,—the monarch observing to Muza that he must not render useless one of the best swords of Islam. This fell heavily on the Wali, but he obeyed the orders of the Caliph without suffering his displeasure to become apparent; setting Taric at liberty, and that day they ate together; when Taric was publicly restored to the command of his troops,—an event which caused much gladness and satisfaction to the Moslemah, who all took part in rejoicing for the justice that was at length rendered to so excellent a leader.

Muza then commanded that Taric should depart with his army for the east of Spain; and the General, giving his orders without delay, disposed himself to set forth instantly for his

new command. On that occasion he caused his forces to proceed in light marching order; to the cavalry he permitted nothing more than their horse-cloths and bag for provender with their copper kettles and the indispensable arms; the infantry were restricted to their arms alone, and were not permitted to embarrass themselves with anything more. The provisions for each tribe were placed on a sufficient quantity of mules, which were divided in numbers properly proportioned to the different bands; and this baggage was conducted by very few men, in such sort that arms vigorous enough to wield the sword were not employed in less important occupations: no useless vehicles were permitted to impede the progress of the rapid marches—no superfluities of any kind, whether of beasts or men, were allowed to be there, seeing that these do but consume the provisions provided, or, at the least, they destroy the fruits of the lands over which they pass. The leaders repeated to their troops the prohibition against robbery and violence, which had been previously forbidden, on pain of death; they were permitted to plunder only on the field of battle, or on taking possession of cities by force—nay, even in these cases they were commanded to refrain until they had first received the permission of their chiefs.

CHAP. XVI.—THE CONQUESTS OF TARIC BEN ZEYAD IN THE EAST, AND OF MUZA BEN NOSEIR IN THE NORTH OF SPAIN.

TARIC directed his march towards the East, and following the course of the Tagus, ascended that river towards its source; then, traversing the wild mountains of Arcabica, Molina, and Segoncia, he descended into the plains and valleys watered by the Ebro.

Muza, on the other hand, passing behind the mountains, attained to Salamanca and other cities, all of which surrendered without resistance. Proceeding thus to Astorga, he then returned towards the Douro, and continuing along the course of that river towards the eastern parts of

Spain, he, too, descended upon the Ebro, and pressed forward to the siege of Medina Saragossa, which was already closely beleaguered by the forces of Taric.

The army of Taric had already occupied all the remaining cities of the province; but in Saragossa a vast body of defenders had gathered from all parts of Spain, and that town still held out, although the garrison had suffered much diminution, and the vigorous blockade which it had endured had caused infinite distress among the inhabitants. But on the arrival of Muza, the courage of the Christians gave way, and they sent to make proposals of surrender, provided the conditions offered were such as could be accepted without dishonour.

Now Muza was aware of the fact that a vast amount of riches was heaped up in Saragossa, having been informed that the city had been made their depository by all the communities of Eastern Spain; he also knew the grievous condition to which the people were then reduced from the want of provisions, and therefore imposed on them a very heavy payment over and above the ordinary conditions. This sum they were adjudged to furnish on the day when the Moslemah should enter the city;—and the money was called "The Contribution of Blood;" because the people thereby redeemed themselves from the sword of the conqueror.

Pressed by necessity, Medina Saragossa submitted to all the demands made by her victor; but to assemble the vast amount required by Muza Ben Noseir they were compelled to take the treasures of the churches as well as those of the richest inhabitants; and when this was done, the Moslemah general further demanded hostages, and took as many as he pleased from the youth of the noblest families in the city. He finally placed a garrison of carefully-selected troops in the place, and gave the government of Saragossa to Hanax Ben Abdallah Asenani, who shortly afterwards built there a magnificent mosque and very large aljama.

The army of Muza then continued its course, and entered without resistance into possession of numerous towns and cities, among which were Huesca, Tarassona, Lerida, Calahorra, Taragona, Barcelona, Gerona, and Ampurias: nor did the Wali make halt until he had reached the Mountains of

Afranc.* Taric Ben Zeyad meanwhile descending the Ebro to Tortuga, then turned southwards, and took possession of Murviedro, Valencia, Xativa, and Denia; all these cities submitted without resistance to the conditions of Islam,—the inhabitants remaining peacefully masters of their possessions under the faith and protection of the Moslemah.

Novairi relates furthermore that the Wali Muza passed into the Land of Afranc, and occupied Medina Narbona,† where he took possession of seven idols in silver, all being figures of men seated on horseback, which he found in one of the churches. But he soon returned to Spain, and proceeding towards the Guf or northern part of that land, he entered Gallicia by Astorga, subsequently passing into Lugidania.‡ In all these parts Muza Ben Noseir gathered great riches, which he shared with no other commander, but kept all for himself.

The mode of conduct, as well as the direction pursued by Taric, was altogether different. In each of his conquests he divided the spoils and contributions of the vanquished with his Moslemah captains, reserving the fifth part, which belonged to the Caliph, for the use of that monarch, with the most rigid justice and exactitude. He now no longer communicated his undertakings and their results to Muza Ben Noseir, but wrote directly to the Caliph, not unfrequently censuring the covetousness and exactions of the Wali, whose avarice had become insatiable. On his part, Muza complained of the proceedings of Taric, and assured the Caliph that the power assumed by the latter was highly prejudicial to good discipline, since he was thus setting an example of insubordination that could not but prove destructive to the union of the Moslemah, while he was at the same time and furthermore injuriously affecting them by his prodigal and injudicious liberalities.

From these mutual accusations, the Caliph, Walid Ben Abdelmelic, inferred that it was now become advisable to

* France.

† Narbonne.

‡ "So," remarks our author in a note, "do the Arabs corrupt the name of Lusitania."

place the continuance of the Spanish conquest in other hands, and recal both those leaders, even Taric and Muza, to Syria.

CHAP. XVII.—Of the departure of Muza and Taric from Spain, and their return to Damascus.

The Caliph accordingly sent letters to Muza and Taric commanding them both to repair to Damascus without delay, and enjoining Muza to leave the government of Spain and Africa in the hands of men who might be trusted. These orders caused much regret to Muza, yet he did not resign all hope of once more renewing his conquests, and thus encouraged, made preparations for his departure. He decided that his son Abdelaziz should hold the government of Spain during his absence, and confided the troops on the frontier to the General Naaman Ben Abdallah. These things arranged, he took his way by Toledo to Cordova and Seville, with a large company of horsemen, gathering up on his passage all the treasures that he had amassed. In Seville it was that he fixed the new Emir or governor, his son Abdelaziz, with whom he left also his nephew Ayûb, the son of his sister, a leader much esteemed by all the Moslemah, and from whose prudence and valour he hoped that Abdelaziz would derive much useful aid. His Treasurer, and the Intendant of his spoils, Isa Ben Abdallah El Towail, of Medina, likewise remained at Seville,—for so did the Wali Muza, the Moslemah governor, think best to order it.

Four hundred nobles belonging to the royal families of the Goths, and whom Muza Ben Noseir held as hostages, that general took with him into Syria, commanding that each should bear the symbols of his dignity—a gold diadem on the head and a girdle of gold around the waist. The Wali Muza thus left Spain with great riches which he had extracted from the conquered country, and of which he now took a large part into Africa with uninterrupted good fortune.

At this time the Admiral of the Sea for the communication

and passage between Spain and Africa was Muhamed Ben Umen Ben Thabita: it was he who, according to Abu Said, author of the History of Egypt, had conveyed over the troops of Taric and Muza for the conquest of Spain; and according to what Abdallah Ben Abdelhakem has recorded in his History, he was still serving on the Sea of Tunis in the year of the Hegira 102.

To the government of Tangia and Almagreb the Wali Muza had previously appointed his son Abdelola, and in Cairvan he left another son, called Meruan: them he confirmed in their offices, and then, laden with riches from those regions of the West, he entered Syria in the year of the Hegira 95.*

The General Taric, who had received from the Caliph the same order to repair to Damascus, set off for that purpose a short time before Muza, and his army was left in the command of Habib Ben Abi Obeida, who was entrusted with the conquest of Gallicia and Lusitania. When Taric arrived at Damascus the Caliph was not in the city, but at Dair Marûn, whither Taric consequently repaired, and where he was received by Walid Ben Abdelmelic with much honour, the Caliph rejoicing greatly to see the renowned conqueror of Spain. The soverign then assured his general that he was fully convinced of his uprightness of purpose and good conduct, but had been compelled to recall him, partly that he might hear from his own lips the whole truth as regarded affairs of so much importance, but also in part because it had become unadvisable that he should longer remain in a country where the sons of Muza were all-powerful, seeing that they were certainly not his friends.

Taric then gave an account of everything that he had done, and concluded with these words: "My Lord, O King, the honourable Moslemah of thy hosts, who have known my proceedings in Africa and Spain, can bear testimony as to what my deeds have been on all occasions,—nay, even of our enemies the Christians I might safely enquire if they have ever found me cowardly, cruel, or covetous." The Caliph Walid was highly pleased with the words of Taric: he re-

* A.D. 713.

plied that the whole affair was well known to him, and added that he was abundantly satisfied with the good services of his General.

Abdelaziz Ben Muza was meanwhile at Seville, where he had fixed the Court and Aduana* of the Arabs, having chosen that place principally that he might be in a better position for maintaining his communications with Africa.

Now Abdelaziz had in his company a woman of the Goths called Ayela, who had been wife to Roderic, the King of Spain. She was very beautiful, and Abdelaziz, loving her greatly, persuaded her to be his wife, when their nuptials were celebrated with great rejoicings in Seville; and Ayela thenceforward received the name of Omalisam.† Abdelaziz soon afterwards departed to continue his conquests, leaving directions with Habib Ben Abi Obeida, Ben Ocba, Ben Nafe, to the end that he might do as much as might be in his power for the extension of the Moslemah influence in the district entrusted to his charge.

When Muza approached Syria, laden as aforesaid with the spoils and riches of Spain and Africa, the Caliph Walid lay sick of a grave malady; wherefore the brother of Walid, Suleiman Ben Abdelmelic, wrote from Ramla, where he then was, to Muza Ben Noseir, commanding the Wali to halt by the way, and not to enter the country until he should do so under Suleiman's own rule, since it was now certain that the Caliph Walid could not recover from that sickness. But Muza did not obey, and arrived before the death of the Caliph.

Walid instantly commanded that both leaders should appear together in his presence, which was done accordingly. At the offering which Muza then made of the treasures which he had brought for the Caliph, he presented among other gifts the precious table of emeralds, bordered with jacinths, saying, "This have I found, O Caliph!" But Taric made

* The Aduana of the Arabians is the Senate House or Council Chamber, wherein the Mexewares or Counsellors hold their sittings. Our Spanish Arabs subsequently gave this name to the public treasury or place of receipt and deposit for the revenues of the State. Among the Turks the Hall of Council is still called Divan, from the word Aduana.—*Condé*.

† The lady of the precious necklace.—*Idem*.

answer to the effect that the table had been found by himself. "O Commander of the Faithful," exclaimed Muza, thereupon, "what this man saith is not the truth." But Taric replied, "Let us see if the table be not defective in some part, and if it be so found, then inquire of him who was indeed the first possessor, where the part thus wanting now is, and let him who shall supply the loss be admitted to have found the table."

The Caliph and all present then examined the table more minutely, and it was seen that Muza had affixed a leg of gold in place of that wanting; wherefore Taric exclaimed, "Inquire of Muza if so it was that he found it, and if it originally had this leg of gold." When Muza replied, "So it was that I found it." Then Taric, producing the leg that he had reserved, showed that it did truly belong to the table, since it corresponded in every particular with the other three legs: the deception practised by Muza was thus made manifest, to the Caliph's great astonishment.

A few days afterwards the Caliph Walid Ben Abdelmelic died of his malady, and was succeeded in the empire by his brother Suleiman.

Aly Ben Abderahman Ben Hudeil of Granada relates, that when Muza Ben Noseir first presented himself to the Caliph Suleiman Ben Abdelmelic on his return to Spain, the monarch enquired if he had encountered a very brave people in the course of his conquests, and Muza replied, "They are much more so, my lord, than I could express." "Tell me, then, what is thy opinion of these Christians," continued the Caliph; and Muza made answer, "They are lions in their fortresses and eagles on their horses, but no better than women in the combat of infantry. They know well how to avail themselves of an advantage when they have it in their hands; and after you have conquered them, they are as goats in the rapidity of their flight, springing to their mountains with such speed that they do not see the earth they pass over."

"And what of the men of Barbary?" inquired the Caliph. "They resemble our own Arabs in the attack," replied Muza, as also in their modes of fighting and the aid they render

each other. They resemble us moreover in their endurance of hardship, in the expression of the countenance, and in the exercise of hospitality; but for the rest they are the most perfidious men that exist,—they fulfil no promise, they do not keep their plighted word, and have neither faith nor truth." "And of those of Afranc what hast thou to tell me?" "They are a people of infinite numbers, and in the attack they are prompt and ready, nor do they fail to acquit themselves well in the fight; but, once put to flight, they are timid and fearful beyond measure."

"And among all these various peoples how has it gone with thee?" continued Suleiman; "hast thou always overcome them, or have they sometimes vanquished thee?" "No, by Allah!" exclaimed Muza, thereupon; "not a banner of mine have they ever borne away, nor have my Moslemah once hesitated to meet them, even though they came upon us as eighty to forty." Now Suleiman was well pleased with these words of Muza; but, being offended by his refusal to await his own accession to the throne before re-entering Syria, he cast him into prison, exposed him to public derision in the light of the sun, condemned him to the bastinado, and fined him in the sum of 100,000 mitcales,—other authorities say 200,000 pieces of gold.

CHAP. XVIII.—Of the Empire of the Caliph Suleiman.

Suleiman was chosen Caliph, or successor to the Empire, on the day of his brother Walid's death. His mother's name was Abesa, and she was the daughter of Alabâs, called Abu Ayûb. His proclamation to the empire was made in the middle of the moon of the last Giumada, and in the year of the Hegira 96. His nephew Coteiba, the son of Muslema, presumed to rebel in Khorassan; but the faithful Mosleman troops opposed his designs, and took away his life. Suleiman then appointed Jezid Ben Mahlabi; Ben Abi Sofia, to be governor of the province previously held by Coteiba, when Jezid extended his rule into Taboristan and Georgia.

The brother of Caliph Suleiman, Muslema Ben Abdelmelic, also carried the banners of Islam into the land of the

stranger, going forth against the Greeks, whom he pursued even to Constantinople, their chief city.

Then the governor of Egypt, Corraho, having departed from life, Suleiman sent in his place Asama, who was a very cruel extortioner. He compelled each inhabitant of his provinces to supply himself with a Manxur, or passport, to obtain which he had to pay ten dinars; and he who was found without this Manxur, or permission to move freely in and out, incurred the penalty of being branded with fire; so that none dared to refuse the purchase of the required document, until it pleased God to make an end of that cruel Emir, who extracted the very marrow from the bones of the people.

It was Asama who repaired, or rather caused to be newly erected, that Nilometer whereby the increase of the Nile is ascertained. The old one at Hulwan had become dilapidated by time; and, with the permission of Caliph Suleiman, Asama constructed that which is on the island between the river of Fostat* and the river of Giza,—an admirable work, which was completed in the year of the Hegira 97.

Abdelaziz was meanwhile pursuing the conquest of Spain, which he carried to the extreme of Lusitania and the coasts of the great ocean, his captains overrunning all the land of Alguf,† Pampeluna, and the Albaskense Mountains,‡ gathering much spoil, and many precious treasures. But the contributions and tribute of the subjugated people Abdelaziz sent into Syria, with the account of his conquests; and for this purpose he chose Muhamed Ben Habib Ben Abi Obeida El Moaferi, Assama Ben Melic El Chulani, and Ismael Ben Abi Abdallah of Beni Mahrûm, with other officers of distinction,—in all ten men. The revenues of the Spanish provinces were joined with those of Africa, and were all to be collected by the Mechtisébes, or Receivers-general of each province, into one sole chest.

* Fostat is a tent or pavilion; the name is given to that spot in the ancient Memphis where Amru Ben Alâs, the conqueror of Egypt, was for some time encamped, according to Edris and Elmacen: the place was afterwards included within the limits of Grand Cairo.—*Condé.*

† Alguf, or Algufia, is the northern part of a country, as Alquibla is the south, Axarquia the east, and Algarbe or Algarbia the west.—*Idem.*

‡ That part of the Pyrenees which borders the Basque country.—Tr.

The sum thus taken from Spain to Syria by these ten deputies was immense, and they entered Damascus with the treasure in the year 97. They were well received by the Caliph Suleiman, who commanded, nevertheless, that eight of their number—or, as others say, five—should return at once to Spain, with secret orders from their sovereign to make halt in the African governments held by the sons of Muza Ben Noseir in Cairvan and Tangier, and having deposed them from their respective governments, they were then to deprive them of life. Among the messengers thus commissioned were Assama, Ismael, Habib, and Naaman. Orders of similar import were at the same time despatched by Suleiman to five of the principal leaders in Spain, who were enjoined to do the same thing as respected Abdelaziz, seeing that the Caliph, jealous of the power attained by the family of Muza, from whom he conceived himself to have received an affront, determined that no member thereof should be suffered to remain in life,—a deplorable reward for the distinguished services of that noble race.

CHAP. XIX.—Of the death of Abdelaziz and the government of Ayub.

The first by whom these cruel orders, which had remained sealed until the arrival of the bearer in Spain, were opened and read, was the faithful friend of Muza Ben Noseir, and companion of his son Abdelaziz, the General Habib Ben Obeida El Fehri. The letter fell from his trembling hand, and turning to the General Zeyad Ben Nabaa, also a friend of Abdelaziz, and charged like himself with the same grievous commission, he exclaimed, "Can it be that the envy and hatred of Muza's foes have prevailed to this extent? and is it thus that the many glorious deeds and great services of his house are forgotten? But God is just; he has commanded us to obey our sovereign, and we have no choice but to do so."*

Abdelaziz was then at a villa or country-house near Se-

* Here De Marlès has a note to the following effect:—"This sentiment of abnegation in the subject makes the true force of the despot. If Habib had lived under Charles the IXth he would have been a zealous destroyer of the Huguenots."

ville, called Kenisa-Rebina, where he had commanded a mosque to be built, and where the people were wont to assemble for prayer In this place, which was but a kind of farm, the Wali Abdelaziz loved to pass his hours of leisure with his family. The officers charged with the Caliph's orders were anxious to fulfil them; but, fearing lest the troops, by whom Abdelaziz was much beloved, should rise in rebellion and defend their general, they agreed to spread the report that he had become faithless to the Law of Islam, and unduly disposed towards the Christians, whom they accused him of favouring beyond measure. This they did to avoid division and disquietude among the Moslemah; but the vulgar crowd soon added to these calumnies, declaring that Abdelaziz proposed to make himself king, and, incited by his wife Agela,* who aspired to see him wear the diadem, had already assumed the purple robes of royalty. They furthermore declared that, by means of Abdelaziz, the Christians hoped again to become masters of the country.

These rumours once current among the lower classes of the Moslemah, that rude multitude was well prepared to receive the orders of the Caliph, which were then made public, and appeared so just and providential to all, that none desired to be exempt from a share in the execution thereof, which they considered to be a meritorious action. Yet there were not wanting some who held a different opinion, and, refusing to believe the alleged guilt of Abdelaziz, would fain have prevented his destruction. It required all the influence of Zayad Ben Nabigat El Temimi to restrain the troops most attached to the Wali, who were resolved to defend him at all hazards.

His enemies prevailed nevertheless. At the hour of the morning prayer Abdelaziz was engaged in his devotions, when a confused horde broke into his rooms and assassinated him in wild and cruel emulation, each eager to deal his blow; they then separated the head from his body, which they buried in the court of his house. There was subsequently some disorder among the guards of the murdered Wali, and considerable dissatisfaction was expressed by those most attached to his interests; but the general voice ap-

* Or, as she is also called, Egilona.

proved the deed, since such was the command of the Caliph, —a reason to which all were eventually compelled to yield themselves, and the best friends of the murdered Wali could do no other than submit to that decree.

The death of Abdelaziz took place in the end of the year of the Hegira 97, or, as some say, 98; when Spain continued to be ruled by deputies, and was without any governor or Emir named by the Caliph, for nearly a year.

Commissioners were meanwhile despatched to Damascus, bearing the head of Abdelaziz to the Caliph, and with them went also Habib Ben Obeida El Fehri. On this occasion Theodomir sent messengers to Suleiman, begging him to confirm the treaties of peace and protection accorded to the Gothic princes by Muza Ben Noseir, and the Caliph confirmed them accordingly,—nay, that monarch even lightened imposts which had been laid on the Christians by Muza, insomuch that the messengers returned well satisfied to Spain.

The generals and principal Moslemah, having then assembled in council, determined by common accord to elect the general Ayûb, cousin of the unhappy Abdelaziz, for Wali, or governor of the interior of Spain; his authority, and the opinions universally held respecting his character, having secured to Ayûb the first place among all the Moslemen of Spain. The new Wali changed the court and Aduana of the Arabs, from Seville to Cordova, thinking it better to recede towards the centre of the country, to the end that he might the more effectually rule the remaining provinces thereof. Having set all things in order throughout Andalusia, Ayûb departed with his army to visit the East of Spain; passing through Toledo, he there remained some time, giving audience to the people, hearing their complaints, and arranging the differences existing between them and their governors. He then crossed the mountains and entered Saragossa, where the governor was Hanax Ben Abdallah Ben Amru, the conqueror of Egypt, Africa, the Almagreb, and Spain,—a companion of Muza Ben Noseir. This Hanax had performed great exploits in the last-named country, and had built a magnificent mosque in Saragossa: he died about the time we now speak of, and was buried with high honours in a sepulchre standing close to that of Muza Ben Aly Ben Rebah, which is at the Alquibla,

or South Gate, and close to the wall as you ascend from the city. Near these tombs was likewise that of Abu Amer Ahmed Ben Muhamed Ben Derag.

During his progress the Wali Ayûb caused the ruins of a certain old city to be raised from the ground, and there he built a strong fortress, called after himself Calat-Ayûb. He continued his march even to the borders of Afranc, which is France, and in this expedition took measures for securing the frontier line along all the East of Spain.

When the commissioners by whom the embalmed head of Abdelaziz, enclosed in a precious casket, was presented to the Caliph, brought their charge into his presence, Suleiman had the cruelty to show it to Musa Ben Noseir, who, with other generals, was then paying his respects to the sovereign. He lifted the cover of the casket before the eyes of all, and exclaimed, "Dost thou recognise this head, O Muza?" Turning aside his face, the unhappy father replied, "Yes, I know it;" and giving unrestrained expression to the warmth of his indignation, he added, "Accursed of God may he be who hath murdered a man better than himself!" That said, he departed full of grief from the palace, and retiring instantly to Merat Dheran, or, as some say, to Wadilcora, he there died of sorrow before the year which had beheld the destruction of his sons had run to its close. There are, nevertheless, some who say that this circumstance of the death of Muza Ben Noseir took place while the latter was proceeding towards Mecca, whither he had attended the Caliph, who was repairing thither in pilgrimage. Suleiman himself died soon after the deposed and injured Wali; in the commencement of the year 99 namely, while the death of Muza happened in the year 98.

Now the Caliph Suleiman had declared his son Ayûb his successor and the future sovereign of the empire; but the youth died some time after this had been done, and Omar Ben Abdelaziz Ben Meruan was then declared the future Caliph.

Some short time before the departure of Caliph Suleiman the great Aljama of Damascus was completed. The cost of this edifice was 40 purses, each containing 14,000 gold doubloons. Six hundred lamps, suspended by chains of gold,

were hung from the ceiling, and when all were lighted, the splendour was so overpowering, that the devotions of the faithful were troubled thereby. The smoke of these lamps darkened the walls, moreover, and Caliph Omar commanded that they should be removed, when others of less value and fewer in number were hung in their place, the chains of gold being cast into the treasury of the State.

Now Caliph Suleiman was a very handsome man, and as on a certain day he was regarding his fair looks in a mirror, he turned towards his women-slaves, exclaiming, "Verily it is I who am the king of youth!" whereon one of his favourites replied in verse to the following effect:—"Thou art handsome; yea, none can deny it; but all human beauty hath this defect, that it will not remain, and thine shall pass away as the flower of the meadow, as the shadow that crosses the sun." Hearing this, the Caliph fell into a profound melancholy, which continued during several days, and at the end of that period he died, his departure taking place on the 21st of the Moon Safir, in the year 99. The decease of Suleiman Ben Abdelmelic occurred at Merg-Dabic, in the country of Kinserina, after he had reigned two years and eight months.

CHAP. XX.—Of the empire of the Caliph Omar ben Abdelaziz, and the government of Alhaur in Spain.

To the Caliph Suleiman succeeded his cousin Omar Ben Abdelaziz, whose mother was Om-Asima, daughter of the great Caliph Omar I. Ben Abdelaziz was called Abu-Hafas. On the first day of his reign Omar Ben Abdelaziz commanded that the bad practice of anathematising Aly, which it had been customary to do in the mosques every day after the public prayer, should thenceforth be discontinued. That evil habit had prevailed from the time of Moavia Ben Abi Sofian, first Caliph of the Omeyan race, who had ordered it to be adopted in the heat of his zeal, and during the fervour of rivalry which had been induced by the civil wars. But Omar said, "God hath commanded beneficence and jus-

tice to all, not envy and evil-speaking:" he therefore prohibited the custom.

Moreover, hearing of the cruelty and exactions committed in Egypt by the Wali Asama, Caliph Omar despatched Ayûb Ben Sarhabil to take the government in his place, ordering Asama to be sent in chains to Damascus; and this command Ayûb obeyed so rigorously that, having caused a heavy ring of iron to be rivetted on the neck of Asama, the deposed Wali died of pure fatigue before reaching Damascus. The Caliph furthermore commanded that all the stipulations made with the Christian tributaries should be carefully maintained, and that they should be left in peaceful possession of their churches, the Moslemah being forbidden to disturb them on any pretext whatever: this order extended to and was observed in all the provinces. He confirmed Jezid Ben Abi Muslema in the government of Africa, and as Spain made a part of his Ameership or rule, Jezid took care to send thither such Walis as possessed his confidence. Now it was Jezid Ben Abi Muslema who had received from Suleiman the command for deposing the sons of Muza Ben Noseir in Africa, and having learned that Ayûb was of the family of Muza, Jezid wrote orders to the effect that he should be removed from his government, appointing in his place Alhaûr Ben Abderahman El Caisi, a general of great influence.

These commands, with all other communications between Africa and Spain, were transmitted by the Wali of the Spanish Fleet, Ayax Ben Xerahil, El Homairi. 'Ayûb had been Ameer of Spain seven months, and had proceeded with so much prudence in all things, that even the venomous tooth of malignity herself could find nothing in his irreproachable conduct whereon to affix its hold.

The Emir Alhaûr, covetous alike of glory and riches, departed for the frontier of Eastern Spain with a large army; penetrating into Narbonese Gaul, which is a territory of Afranc, he took the city of Narbonne, and ravaged the whole district, drawing thence immense treasures, and carrying the women and children away captives. This Alhaûr was a hard and inflexible man, cruel to the Moslemah as well as to their enemies; he punished the slightest offences with death, and every one trembled in his presence. While the

terror of his incursions was filling all the lands watered by the Garonne, and which lie beyond the mountains of Albortat,* there arrived in Spain the heavy news of the excellent Caliph Omar's death: he departed from life at Hasira on the 25th day of Regib, in the year 100, after having ruled only two years and five months. There would seem to be this fatality pursuing human affairs, that for the most part the best princes have but short lives. Omar was mourned even by the enemies of his house, and of him Xarif El Musawi spake as follows:—"O son of Abdelaziz, if human eyes could weep for any one of the house of Omeya, these of mine should have wept over thee! Thou hast delivered us from the dishonour and infamy of the public curse; and if it were possible, fain would I deliver thee also from malediction."

CHAP. XXI.—Of the empire of the caliph Jezid ben abdelmelic and the government of asama.

To the Caliph Omar succeeded Jezid, the son of Abdelmelic and of Atica, daughter of Jezid Ben Moavia, not by the disposition of his cousin Caliph Omar, but because it had been so commanded by Sulciman his brother. He was proclaimed on the day of his virtuous predecessor's decease, the 6th of the moon Regib, in the year 101. That same year the governor Jezid Ben Mahlab Ben Abi Sofia had rebelled in his province of Bassora, and, having gathered a considerable force, had seized on Cufa; but the Caliph sent against him his brother Muslema and his nephew Abas Ben Walid, with the people of Syria. When the two armies met, the rebels were defeated, and Jezid fell into the hands of Muslema, who cut off his head, which he sent to the Caliph.

Meanwhile Moavia, son of the rebel Wali, entered Wasit

* The Arabs called the Pyrences Gibâl Albortat, Mountains of the Gates, this being their manner of rendering the barbarous Latin word "portas;" and so do we still call the narrow passes of the mountains which permit an entrance from one region to another "Puertas," ports or gates.—*Condé.*

by surprise, and slew the governor Adi, with thirty-two of his guards; he then proceeded to Bassora, and embarking there, passed over to Candabil in Sindia. Muslema instantly despatched Helal Ben Achor El Megani in pursuit, and having overtaken the rebel and his followers, whom he defeated, Helal sent all bound to the Caliph, who commanded that his executioners should put them to an ignominious death. Jezid then gave the government of Irâk and Khorassan to his brother Muslema.

In this year Caliph Jezid deposed Ayûb Ben Sarhabil from the government of Egypt, and appointed Baxar Ben Sefuan El Kelbi in his place; but as the latter was soon afterwards sent into Africa to assume the general government, the province of Egypt was then given to his brother Hantala Ben Sefuan.

The Ameer of Spain, Alhaûr, was meanwhile continuing his exactions in that country, and was robbing the people of all they possessed. Instead of doing justice against the oppressors, and restraining the extortions of his subordinates, he was himself the most cruel of extortioners, and used his power only to uphold wrong. He oppressed all alike, the Christians, those who had but newly embraced Islam, and the oldest of the Moslemah families, without distinction, these last having ventured to warn him of the disgust and displeasure caused to all good men by the violence of his conduct. Alhaûr likewise imprisoned many Alcaides and Captains of provinces under pretext that they had concealed the treasures entrusted to them, and neglected to account for the products of the tribute paid by their people; for this cause many leaders retired from the army of the frontier, and abandoned the propagation of the faith. All these things being made known to the governor of Africa, were communicated by him to the Caliph, to whom Hantala sent the letters which had been written to himself on that subject, by the general Ambisa Ben Sohim El Kelbi, Naaman Ben Abdallah El Hadrami, and other illustrious Moslemen. The Caliph thereupon commanded that Alhaûr should quit Spain, and charged the Wali Assama Ben Melic El Chulani with the government, he having already the command of a part of the army. By this means the people of Spain suc-

ceeded in obtaining their deliverance from that cruel and avaricious Ameer. The deposition and departure from Spain of Alhaûr Ben Abderahman El Caisi took place in the year of the Hegira 101.

The new Ameer, Alsama Ben Melic, now proceeded to the frontier of Afranc without delay, accompanied by all the most distinguished Mosleman leaders of Eastern Spain, their numerous forces filling the whole territory of Narbonne, Carcassonne, and Tolosa.* To the latter city they laid close siege, and held it already for their own, having obtained numerous advantages over the beseiged, and being now ready to give the assault, when intelligence reached the Moslemah camp that the King of Afranc, with an innumerable host, was approaching to the succour of the city.

Alsama was, nevertheless, far from being intimidated. He made an inspiriting oration to his troops, set them in order of battle, and commanded them to begin the fight. The number of his enemies was such that the sun was obscured by the dust of their feet, which filled the air as with impenetrable clouds. The Moslemah forces advanced boldly nevertheless, towards the enemy, who also came forward in good order, when Alsama rode through the ranks of his people, exhorting them in these terms: "Do not be afraid of the multitude approaching," he said, "for if God be with us, who shall be against us?"

The two armies encountered each other with a furious impetuosity resembling that of two torrents falling from the mountains to the plain; they fought with equal bravery, each side standing immoveable against the other as do the steadfast mountains. The carnage was frightful, and victory long remained doubtfully suspended between the two parties. Alsama was to be seen on every side, brave as a lion; his presence gave strength to his people in the most sanguinary periods of the slaughter: if they could not hear his words they could at least see his deeds. The exploits he performed would seem incredible if here related; the blood of the enemy distilled from his arms at all points as it flowed from his raised sword like a torrent, and wherever he appeared the opponents sank beneath his glance. But too deeply did he

* Toulouse.

finally plunge amidst the ranks of the foe; the lance of a Christian warrior pierced him through from one side to the other, and Alsama fell dead from his horse.

So fatal an event threw the Arabian cavalry into disorder and dismay. That part of the force began to give signs of yielding, and was followed by the rest of the army. The Moslemah then left the field to the enemy, but they left it covered with corpses, which lay floating in blood. This cruel combat took place on the day of Attarviya* of the Moon Dylhagia; the last moon, that is to say, of the year 103. Many distinguished leaders died in that slaughter, and among them was Naaman Ben Abdallah El Hadrami, one of the earliest conquerors of Spain. On that day also died Naim Ben Abderahman Moavia El Tegibi, with many other noble cavaliers.

The Moslemah force then retired to Narbonne, where the generals of the eastern frontier entrusted the command of the troops to Abderahman Ben Abdallah El Gafeki, who was much admired by the soldiers for his well-proved bravery and the exploits he had performed on various occasions,—as in particular during that last battle, and in the retreat from Tolosa, wherein he had exhibited prodigies of valour. He had besides another soldierly quality always highly appreciated,—a singular generosity and liberal openness, namely, which had long secured him the love of the troops; thus his election was applauded by all.

When the defeat sustained at Toulouse was made known in Spain, bodies of Mosleman troops were put in movement through all the provinces, and this was done by order of Ambisa Ben Sohim, to whom the Emir Alsama had entrusted the command when departing himself for the frontier. The choice which the defeated army had made of a leader was approved by the governor of Africa, to whom the reputation of the illustrious captain, Abderahman Ben Abdallah El Gafeki, was well known. In the same year the Caliph

* The Attarviya is the 9th day of the Moon Dylhagia, and is also called the day of Mina, because it is that on which the pilgrims to Mecca visit the Valley of Mina, which they do with many strange ceremonies and vain observances. It is a great fast, and, according to the Mosleman Calendar, "is of merit as if one gave a thousand horses for the Sacred War."—*Condé*.

conferred the government of Egypt on his own brother, Muhamed Ben Abdelmelic, who remained therein until the Caliph Jezid died, which he did at Harran, on the 25th of the moon Xaban, in the year 105, having reigned four years and one month.

Jezid was a very handsome man, but much devoted to his pleasures, and immoderately fond of games and public spectacles. He squandered large sums on his female slaves, and had two, called Hebaba and Selima, whom he loved more than himself. Hebaba having died, he refused to permit her burial, and retained the corpse until it could no longer be endured. His brother reproached him for this weakness, when he made answer as follows: "All tell me the same, but I alone know what is my sorrow, and I see that there remains no remedy but death. If it come not to-day I shall expect it to-morrow, for soon shall I depart to our eternal home." His servants having interred the corpse of Hebaba, he impatiently commanded that it should be again brought to his sight, and, regarding it with an excess of sorrow which seemed to have rendered him nearly senseless, he could no longer be torn from the bier of his dead favourite, and died himself a few days after, in the 29th, or, as some say, in the 33rd year of his age.

The brave Ameer Abderahman was meanwhile repairing the losses of Tolosa, and not only held the Christians of Narbonese Gaul in check, but even expelled the insurgents from the mountains of Afranc.* He subjugated such as had ventured to rebel in consequence of the advantages obtained by the Christians of Narbonne, obliging all to pay him tribute. Abderahman thus amassed large sums in gold, beside many precious works of art adorned with jacinths and emeralds. Of all this he reserved a fifth part for the Caliph, but divided the whole of the other four parts among his people. This liberality caused him to be so much beloved by the soldiery, that every mountain became a plain when the question was how to do the will of their Ameer; nor was there any difficulty which they did not find means to overcome in his service.

* The French Pyrenees.

CHAP. XXII.—Of the reign of the caliph Hixem, and the government of Abderahman and Ambisa in Spain.

Caliph Jezid was succeeded in the empire by his brother Hixem Ben Abdelmelic, whose mother was Fatima, daughter of Hixem El Mahrumi, called Abulwalid. He was proclaimed on the 25th day of the moon Xaban, in the year 105, which was the day of his brother's death. Hixem, who received the name of Abulwalid, was then at Rusafa, but instantly repaired to Damascus. He deposed his brother Muhamed from the government of Egypt, which he then gave to their cousin, Hasan Ben Jusuf Ben Yahye.

Now there were certain generals in Spain who were envious of the fame and popularity enjoyed by the Ameer Abderahman Ben Abdallah; and Obeida in particular wrote letters accusing him to the governor of Africa. Obeida did not deny the bravery of Abderahman, nor his excellent military qualities, but he censured the administration of the Ameer, which he declared to be negligent, and complained of his indiscreet liberality, which he affirmed to be vitiating the habits and altering the simple and frugal manners of the Mosleman troops. He added that it was not in the power of Abderahman to reclaim himself in this habit of giving largesses to his troops, and that after a victory there was nothing that he could refuse to them, even though heaven and earth should tremble at their demands.

So pressingly were these representations against Abderahman repeated, that they caused him at length to be displaced from his command, which was given to the general Ambisa Ben Sohim El Kelbi, who, in addition to his personal merits, had the further advantage of belonging to the tribe and family of the governor of Africa, Baxar Ben Hantala Ben Sefuan El Kelbi. Ambisa was a general greatly esteemed for his prudence as well as valour, and the heart of the deposed Abderahman was so noble, that he was not offended by thus seeing himself superseded,—nay, he was even contented to resume his old command as he had previously held it in Eastern Spain. The brave and open-hearted soldier paid his compliments without restraint to the new Ameer, and congratulated him on his promotion with expressions of friendship that were cordial and sincere.

The Ameer Ambisa repaired on his installation to the city of Cordova, where the Aduana of the Arabs of Spain had been established from the time of Ayûb. He there took order for the calling in of the public revenues, and distributed lands among the Moslemah, yet without doing wrong to the Christians, since he did but dispose of waste or abandoned districts, of which there yet remained large portions unappropriated. He laid the impost of a fifth on such of the communities as had been conquered by force, and that of a tenth on all who had voluntarily placed themselves under the faith and protection of the Moslemah. He gave orders for the reconstruction of the bridge of Cordova; and these things being done, Ambisa departed on a tour of inspection through the provinces of the interior. In all parts he rendered equal justice to every man, making no distinction between Mosleman and Christian or between Christian and Jew. He was therefore much respected by all.

An insurrection having broken forth in Eastern Spain and the district around Tarragona, the governor hastened thither with all diligence; entering the city by force of arms, he commanded that the walls thereof should be razed to the ground, nor did he fail to punish the instigators of that rebellion. On all the towns which had been a second time subjugated, Ambisa laid double imposts; thus making it the interest of all to remain quiet and maintain peace in the land. By means of his generals he made incursions on the country of Afranc; but these officers cruelly ravaged the fields and burned several towns, slaughtering the men and taking captive the women and children. All these were things which were much disapproved by Ambisa and other good Moslemah, but which it was not easy to prevent, because the greater number declared them to be just and suitable.

Now the Caliph Hixem, desiring to place Obeida Ben Abderahman, nephew of Abu El Awar El Lahmi, and who had previously been General of the Cavalry at Safair, in the government of Africa, deposed Baxar Ben Hantala Ben Sefuan El Kelbi, and deprived him of his command; but this change caused much dissatisfaction to the Yemenies, or Arabs of Yemen, and among them more particularly to the General Husam Abulchatar, who, being at Cairvan (which

city had no walls until Baxar Ben Sefuan had caused them to be made), took his Chlamys around him when he saw Obeida enter the Hall of Assembly, and said to the people, "This, then, is your new Ameer. There is no glory nor power but in God alone." That said, he left the assembly and went his way.

Obeida had no sooner assumed the government than there broke forth great insurrections in Africa, where all were disgusted with his conduct because he laid hands on the possessions of Baxar Ben Hantala and his friends, persecuting all of them, and throwing Husam Abulchatar into prison. It was then that the latter, justly offended by the arbitrary acts of the Ameer, composed the verses so much celebrated, and which are as follows:—

To thee it is as if thou ne'er hadst seen
The blood-bathed field of Rahita. To thee
Hath come forgetfulness of who then bore
For thee the brunt of war.

Yea, thou hast now forgotten whose firm breast,
Whose lance, whose flashing sword, then kept thy life
From the dread foeman's rage. And yet bethink thee
No horse hadst thou save mine,—no guard of foot,
But such as I presented, stood beside thee,
In that most dubious hour when victory turned,
At our command alone, to pour around thee
Her aromatic wines.

Yet what hath chanced, in this thy hour of triumph?
Thou hast nor eye nor ear for us, thy saviours.
Ours be the strife, for thee alone the guerdon.
But as in that wild combat,—thundering forth
As doth the whirlwind, our redoubted arms
Reared high the foeman's limbs to cast them prone,
A mangled mass to earth, so Fortune's hand
Shall serve thyself; and he who now stands proud
On the bright summit of her giddy wheel,
Turning with that, shall sink to lower depths
Than those wherein we lie. Hear! son of Ahman!

These verses, which referred to the battle of Merg-Rahita, and reminded those initiated in the affairs of Africa of the intrigues which Obeida was suspected of being concerned in in that country, came after a time to the knowledge of the Caliph, whom they pleased not a little. He inquired by

whom they were composed, and being told by Said Ben El Walid El Abrax El Kelbi that the author was Husam Ben Dhirar Abulchatar El Kelbi, he did not forget his name, and rewarded him appropriately when the occasion served, as we shall hereafter see.

At this time there was a great movement among the Jews, who were very rich as well as numerous in Spain, many having been settled there from old times, while others had passed over from Africa with the Moslemah. They were now much excited by the appearance in Syria of a certain Zonaria, an impostor who declared himself to be their Messiah,—the King, that is to say, whom the Jews have ever awaited. Their zeal was such that, gathering together from all parts of Gaul and Spain, they repaired with the utmost haste to Syria; whereupon the Ameer Ambisa confiscated all their goods, houses, and other possessions to the state.

The affairs of Spain having been brought into good order, Ambisa then crossed the frontier of Afranc with a large army, wasting the country around Narbonne, and pressing forward even beyond the Rodano.* He took many captives and amassed great riches; but fighting valorously against the Christians he received several wounds, and some of these were so severe that he died thereof not many days after. Before his death Ambisa gave the charge of his troops to the Wali Hodeira, whom he ordered to conduct them until Obeida Ben Abderahman El Caisi should name a new Ameer for the provinces of Spain. The death of Ambisa happened at the end of the year 106.

CHAP. XXIII.—Election and subsequent deposition of certain ameers of spain.

The government of Africa was at that time held by Obeidala Ben El Hagiag; and when the death of Ambisa Ben Sohim was made known to that ruler, he named Yahye Ben Zalema as governor of Spain in his room; and Yahye replaced Hodeira Ben Abdallah El Fehri, who had been provisionally appointed by Ambisa, in the year 107. Yahye Ben Zalema was

* Rhone.

29889

an excellent leader, prudent, just. and maturely experienced in all things relating to war; but he was injudiciously severe, and caused himself to be dreaded for his extreme rigour, as well by the Moslemah as the Christians. He had scarcely taken possession of his government before he proceeded to visit the frontiers on the North of Spain, with the mountains which there form the limit of the country. But the malcontents of his provinces, taking advantage of the arrival of a new governor in Africa, made supplication for the removal of Yahye Ben Zalema, and Coltum Ben Aam, the new Wali, deposed him accordingly, appointing the General Otman Ben Abi Neza to be Ameer of Spain in his stead.

This change was very grateful to the rivals and enemies of Yahye, who were very numerous; and Otman justified their rejoicing by the bravery and ability which he presently afterwards displayed on the frontiers of Afranc.* Otman Ben Abi Neza assumed the government in the year 108. In that same year Hasan Ben Jusuf Ben Yahye, the cousin of the Caliph, abdicated his government of Egypt, and Caliph Hixem appointed Hafas Ben Walid El Hadrami in his place.

But the new Ameer Otman held the government of Spain for a few months only. The same persons who had sought his elevation, dissatisfied with his proceedings, and disappointed in the vain hopes and extravagant expectations of advantage to themselves which they had formed, sent repeated complaints against him to Coltum Ben Aam, who wrote to the Caliph, requesting him to name the General Hodaifa Ben Alhaûs Ameer of Spain.

Now the venality and inconsequence of those who governed at that time in Africa caused a wide field to be opened to the covetous intrigues and machinations of those ambitious men who aspired to charges and governments in Spain. Thus it came to pass that the Ameer Hodaifa could find neither time nor space for doing anything memorable during the short time of his rule, seeing that but few months had elapsed before the Ameer of Africa thought it advisable to depose him; and to this effect he wrote to the Caliph, conferring the government in the interim on Otman Ben Abi Neza El Chemi. This happened in the year 109.

* France.

But neither did that general retain the command so long as he had desired to do, seeing that the Ameer appointed by the Caliph arrived at the end of six months; and this was Alhaitam Ben Obeid El Kenani, who instantly entered into possession of his office.

By his birth a Syrian, Alhaitam was by nature cruel and avaricious, a fact of which he gave full proof from the beginning. He sent the general, Otman Ben Abi Neza,* to the frontiers of Afranc, while he remained in Andalusia oppressing the people with every kind of vexation. The chief men among the Moslemah, perceiving his cruelty and avarice, did their utmost to ruin him, but the plots which they laid for that purpose were discovered by Alhaitam, and he threw many of their numbers into prison. Then, becoming still more infuriated as the pertinacity of his enemies became more obvious, he deprived all whom he had thus incarcerated of their possessions; and his vengeance not being yet satisfied, he put some of the most active among them to death with fearful tortures.

Among the Moslemah thus imprisoned was one called Zeyad Ben Zaide, a man of great ability as well as of high station. By the efforts of his friends the complaints of Zeyad were happily permitted to reach the ears of the Caliph. Here the sovereign read an account of the cruelty, extortion, and violence, practised by Alhaitam on those committed to his charge. "The oppressed are as the leaves of autumn," said Ben Zoyad; "the discontent of the wronged is increasing, and the aversion felt for Alhaitam knows no bound; great is the injury and discredit brought by this means on the empire and on the cause of Islam." The supplication concluded by these words: "Turn to thy people, O Commander of the faithful, for within reach of this tiger they cannot live for a moment in security."

When the Caliph Hixem had read this complaint, he commanded Muhamed Ben Abdallah to pass into Spain, there to examine the conduct of Alhaitam with discretion and impartiality, when, if the charges brought against him

* This Otman is he whom our old chroniclers (the Spanish) and those of France call Muneza,—a change easy to make from Abu Neza, more especially when the facility with which the Arabs corrupt names is remembered. In some of the Arabian MSS., Abu Neza is called Abu Tezza.—*Condé.*

were found to be just, Muhamed was commissioned to punish him as his crimes had merited, and to appoint the person of the greatest confidence and credit, whom he could find among the generals then in Spain, to be governor of that country in his place.

Arrived at Cordova, Muhamed pursued his enquiries with much prudence and secresy; he examined the acts and commands of Alhaitam, and soon discovered that the complaints made against him were but too well founded. He then presented the letters of the Caliph, and deposing Alhaitam from his command, first paraded him through the streets of the city, on the back of an ass, by way of indignity, and then cast him into prison. Muhamed next restored all those unjustly incarcerated by Alhaitam to their liberty, and confiscating his possessions, he gave back to the persons wronged by the late governor whatever they had a right to claim, taking all from the treasures of the fallen oppressor, whom he subsequently sent to Africa under a strong guard. In the same year the Caliph deposed Hafas El Hadrami from the government of Egypt, appointing Abdelmelic Ben Rafie in his room.

Two months were passed by Muhamed Ben Abdallah in the government of Spain, and during that time he found means to assure himself of the merit and bravery of the general Abderahman Ben Abdallah El Kelbi El Gafeki, whom he named Ameer of Spain accordingly, in virtue of the powers with which he had been invested to that effect by the Caliph. All the Moslemen of Spain applauded that election, and considered it as the seal of the integrity and justice of Muhamed. The only person who remained malcontent and offended was Otman Ben Abi Neza, who thought he had himself merited the authority of Ameer, and felt mortified that he had not obtained it. Muhamed Ben Abdallah then retired whither it pleased God that he should continue his labours. These things happened in the commencement of the year 110.

CHAP. XXIV.—Government of Abderahman, and death of Otman Ben Abi Neza.

When Abderahman Ben Abdallah El Gafeki had received his appointment as Ameer of Spain, he made the tour of all

his provinces, for the purpose of restoring all things to order and repairing the injustice committed by Alhaitam. He heard the complaints of the people with attention and affability, doing equal justice to Moslemah and Christian; he removed all who had been unjust oppressors of the people from their offices, and replaced them by men of known probity, reserving their due rights to all. He restored to the Christians such churches as had been taken from them in contravention of the stipulated treaties; but, on the other hand, he caused to be demolished all those that had been erected by the connivance of interested Governors.

Meanwhile Abderahman lost no time in soliciting reinforcements for the army of Spain, requesting that new troops from Egypt and Africa might be sent for that purpose: on this subject he wrote several times to the Governor of Africa. He employed the first two years of his government in visiting and examining the provinces of the interior; and in the year 113, when Coltum Ben Aam sent him a large body of carefully chosen troops from Africa, all volunteers, Abderahman, not wishing to keep them in idleness, directed their march towards the East of Spain. Insatiable of glory he seemed to hold his life only for the purpose of intrepidly exposing it to the utmost peril of arms and the combat. It was his most earnest desire to carry the banners of Islam more profoundly into the heart of Afranc, and he commanded the generals on the Northern frontier to prepare a powerful host for that purpose.

To that part of the frontier which is bordered by the mountains of Albortat,* Abderahman despatched the general Otman Ben Abi Neza, a man of great valour and many noble qualities, but a rival of the glory and reputation of Abderahman, and at that time envious of his authority. Now Abi Neza, in an incursion which he had made on the territories of Afranc, had taken captive a damsel, the daughter of the Count† of that region, and influenced by the

* The Pyrenees.

† This "Count," whose name is not mentioned in the Arabic authors, was Eudes, Sovereign-Duke of Aquitaine, who was of the race of the ancient Merovingian kings. The French chronicles say that his daughter, the wife of Munuza or Abi Neza, was called Lampegia; others call her Numerancia, and others again Monina.—Tr.

affection which he conceived for this Christian maiden, Otman made peace for a certain period with those of her faith. When he heard of the determination of Abderahman, therefore, he wrote letters dissuading him from his purpose, and giving the truce which he had formed with the Christian Count as a reason wherefore the expedition meditated by Abderahman should not then be undertaken, seeing, as he said, that the peace he had concluded ought not to be broken.

But these exhortations were exceedingly distasteful to Abderahman, and having been informed, by certain who were acquainted with the facts, of the true motive which inspired Otman with so much consideration for the Christian Count, he replied, that since this truce had been formed after the appointment of himself, Abderahman, as Ameer of Spain, he ought to have been consulted before the completion thereof, and in conclusion declared that the expedition was not to be delayed. The letter sent to this effect was written by Abderahman in great heat, and he reminded Otman that the truce he had concluded having been made without his knowledge or permission, and not having received the sanction of his ratification, was altogether invalid, and of none avail. He furthermore bade Otman give intelligence to that effect to the Christians on his frontier, and warned him to hold himself prepared to cross the borders with his force, seeing that there was to be no communication held at that moment between the Moslemah and the men of Afranc, than that made with the sword.

Otman, who already detested Abderahman in his heart, became more than ever enraged at thus finding the truce he had concluded despised and trampled under foot. He gave the Count intelligence of the attack awaiting him, to the end that he might make preparations for the defence of his territories, but added that for himself he would never break the promises of peace which he had given, and was resolved not to appear in person against him. All this was made known to Abderahman, who instantly sent Gedhi Ben Zeyan with troops to observe the proceedings of Otman, commanding him to make careful enquiry, and in the event of finding that Abi Neza was about to make any movement on behalf of the Christians, to seize that general, and put him to death.

These commands were fulfilled with such promptitude by Gedhi Ben Zeyan, that Abi Neza, surprised by the arrival of the large force he commanded, had no time to prepare either for receiving or repulsing it, and was compelled to fly with his family, and with all speed, from the city of Albâb,* where he had his dwelling, and Gedhi, who, entering the city immediately after his departure, was soon assured that he was not concealed there, gave orders that he should be carefully sought in the passes of the mountains.

Abi Neza meanwhile, dreading the fatigues of the way, and the heat of the sun, for his beloved captive, was reposing with her beside a fountain in the midst of a verdant and flowery meadow, wherein there were great fragments of rock which gave shelter to the fount. Here then was halting Otman Abi Neza, thinking more of his captive than of his own life, and although so brave a man, feeling himself tremble even at the sound of the waters, as they fell trickling from the rocks. Suddenly it appeared to those of his household that they heard the step of the pursuer approaching, and the dread of their hearts was no vain terror, for they were indeed immediately surrounded by the soldiers of Gedhi, when the servants of Otman, to whose feet their fear lent wings, fled and left him, as his enemies appeared. Abi Neza sought eagerly for some crevice wherein he might conceal his Captive from their pursuers, but was at once attacked by the messengers of Abderahman: he drew his sword in desperation, vain as was the hope that he could defend his life, brave and powerful though he had ever proved himself, against all that host; but the lances of the soldiery pierced him with numerous wounds, and the unhappy Otman presently expired.†

* The name Medina Albâb is in our Castilian "Ciudad de la Puerta or del Puerto," (of the gate) which sufficiently proves that it was situate in one of the passes of the Pyrenees: this city is sometimes called Puicerdà, and El Pacense calls it *Castrum Libiæ* in *Ceritania.—Condé.*

† According to De Chenier, Abi Neza (or Munuza) did not die as here described, but threw himself from the summit of a high rock to avoid falling alive into the hands of his enemies, and thus died by his own act: but the authority of our author is on this occasion of higher value; the habits and opinions of the Moslemah generally, and those of Otman in particular, make Condé's account by much the more probable one, to say nothing of the indisputable authenticity of the documents whence he derives it.—Tr.

The troops of Gedhi then seized the Christian damsel, and having cut off the head of Otman, they took it, together with the captive, to Abderahman, who exclaimed at the sight thereof,

"Now by the might of Allah so precious a chase was never before made in these mountains." He then commanded that the damsel should be tended with much care and regard, having determined to send her to Damascus.

CHAP. XXV.—Expedition of Abderahman into the Gauls.

At this same time, Muslema, brother of Caliph Hixem, made himself master of certain territories belonging to the Turks, while the two sons of that monarch, Moavia Ben Hixem and Suliman Ben Hixem, gave battle to Constantine, sovereign of the Greeks, whom they defeated and took prisoner. This was in the year of the Hegira 113.

The people of Afranc, meanwhile, and those of the Spanish border, hearing of Otman's death, and knowing the great force of the Moslemah that was coming against them, made the best preparations in their power for defence, and wrote to their neighbours entreating aid. The Count and Lord of the district gathered his forces and went forth against the Arabs, whom he fought with varying success, but Abderahman was upon the whole victorious, and gradually occupied all the towns belonging to the Count. His troops were inflated with their continued good fortune; they desired nothing better than to be led to battle, full of confidence as they were in the valour and military skill of their leader; and of these they had daily experience, to the perpetual loss and heavy disadvantage of the Christians.

Passing the river Garonne, the Moslemah forces burnt all the towns along its banks, destroyed the fruits of the fields, and carried off captives innumerable. Like a desolating tempest it was that this army swept over the land: the success of their incursions, their unchanging prosperity, and the spoils they obtained, had indeed rendered the soldiers insatiable.

When Abderahman crossed the river Garonne, he was opposed by the Count of the territory, but defeated him, and

drove him to take refuge in his city,* which the Moslemah instantly besieged, and soon afterwards entered by force of arms, all now yielding to their life-destroying swords. The Count himself died,† in defence of his town, and the conquerors took off the head from his corpse. They then departed, laden with spoils, to seek further triumphs; and such were the riches of the place that ornaments of gold, topaz, jacinth, and emerald, fell to the lot of all.

The whole land of Afranc (France) was now trembling at the approach of the Mosleman hordes, and the people called on King Caldus ‡ for aid, they described the murderous attacks of the Moslemah cavalry, which seemed to be in all places at once, their squadrons occupying and ravaging the whole territory of Narbona, Tolosa, and Bordhal:§ they also related the death of their Count.

The king consoled them by promises of immediate succour, and in the year 114;‖ having gathered a vast army, he came forth to the battle. The Moslemah had now approached Medina Towrs,¶ and here Abderahman received intelligence of the great host which he was now to encounter. The troops he commanded had fallen into much disorder, being loaded with riches of every kind, and almost sinking beneath the burthen of their spoils: fain would Abderahman, and the other more prudent generals of the Moslemah force, have persuaded their soldiers to abandon these impediments, and think only of their horses and arms, but fearing to discourage them, and confiding in their constant good fortune, they permitted the overweening confidence of other leaders to prevail, and despised the force of their enemies.

But this careless disregard and disdain of the enemy's

* The city would seem to have been Bordeaux.—Tr.

† The general who then lost his life was not the Count Eudes, but a governor acting in his name, since Eudes survived Abderahman.—*Id.*

‡ "So it is," remarks our author in a note, "that the Arabian writers, disfigure the name of Charles Martel: the havoc they make among names foreign to their language is indeed extraordinary. Mesaudi calls almost all the kings of France Colorio or Lodorio, and those of Spain Lodron or Odron. But on the other hand our Castilian chroniclers have treated the Arabian names but little better."

§ Narbonne, Toulouse, and Bordeaux.

‖ A.D. 732.

¶ Medina Towrs: the City of Tours.

power, more especially when accompanied by a relaxation of discipline, has ever been the bane of armies. It is true that the covetous rage for booty incited the soldiers to unheard-of efforts, and pressing the operations of the siege they succeeded in forcing an entrance, but almost under the eyes of the Christian auxiliaries now fast approaching. On that day the fury of the Moslemah was as the rage of hungry tigers; the carnage they made in the city was hideous, and for this it would seem that God had determined to punish them, seeing that fortune then turned her back upon their banners.

It was on the banks of the river Owar,* that the two contending armies of different tongues, Moslemah and Christians, met together, each in some dread of the other. Abderahman, remembering earlier successes, was the first to attack, and came on with the accustomed impetuosity of his formidable horsemen: he was met by the Christians with equal resolution, and the conflict, a sanguinary and obstinate one, held its course throughout the day; nay, until night interposed to separate the two hosts.

On the following day, the combat recommenced with fury at the hour of dawn, when the Moslemah captains, thirsting for blood, and eager to obtain vengeance, penetrated deep into the ranks of the enemy; but in the hottest part of the battle, Abderahman perceived that a great body of his cavalry had abandoned the field, and were hastening to defend the riches amassed in their camp, which was threatened by the enemy. This movement threw the Moslemah force into confusion, and Abderahman, dreading the disorder that must ensue, rushed from side to side, exhorting his people to their duty. Yet he soon found that it was impossible to restrain them, and fighting with the bravest, wherever the battle raged most fiercely, he fell dead with his horse, having first been pierced by lances innumerable. All was now thrown into confusion; the Moslemah gave way on

* The Loire: and according to Velli and other historians the battle took place at about five leagues from Tours; but others say near Poitiers; and with these our author would appear to agree, since he says, in a note to this passage, "The battle was fought on the fields of Poitiers and on the shores of one of the streams that flow into the Loire," very probably on the Vienne.—TR.

every side, and it was only by favour of the descending night that they found means to withdraw from the terrible combat.

The Christians pursued their advantage, and followed the beaten troops through several successive days: the retreating Moslemah were compelled to sustain numerous attacks, and, amidst unimaginable horrors, the struggle was continued even to Narbonne.

This fatal combat, and the death of the illustrious genera Abderahman, took place in the year 115:* the king of France then laid siege to Narbonne, but the city was defended by the Moslemah with such determined bravery that he was compelled to raise the siege, and retired to the interior of his dominion with great loss.

CHAP. XXVI.—Of the election of Abdelmelic ben cotan as ameer of spain, and of his arrival in that country.

When this disastrous battle, and the death of Abderahman, were made known in Spain, a great movement took place among the Moslemah troops on the frontier, all holding themselves ready to depart for such points as might demand their presence. Letters requesting succour were despatched to Africa, and a considerable force of infantry and cavalry was sent immediately by Obeida El Kisi, governor of that country. These troops were commanded by Abdelmelic Ben Cotan El Fehri, whom Obeida had named Ameer of Spain. At the same time Obeida wrote to the Caliph informing him of the late events, and of the defeat sustained by Abderahman, with the death of that general. He likewise made known the provisional appointment which he had made of Abdelmelic to be Ameer of Spain," and that appointment was confirmed by Caliph Hixem, who wrote himself to Abdelmelic Ben Cotan, exhorting him to avenge the sacrificed lives of his Moslemah.

The new Ameer repaired to his government accordingly, and had no sooner entered Spain than he passed with infinite diligence to the frontiers of France; the troops,

* A.D. 733.

which had meanwhile been assembled from all the provinces, following, by forced marches, and coming close on his steps. Abdelmelic found the Moslemah much discouraged and intimidated, but by his frequent discourses he succeeded in restoring them to new hope. He reminded them of the fortunate days that had been theirs, since the commencement of the sacred war; assured them that the sanguinary combats of that holy struggle were the true ladder of Paradise; that even the ambassador of God himself had taken his greatest pride in the fact that he was a son of the sword, and had ever found his most welcome repose beneath the standards that waved over his head on the field of battle. He reminded them that victory and triumph, or defeat and death, were alike in the hands of God, by whom they are conferred at His pleasure on such as he shall select, giving the triumph on one day to him who had been conquered on that preceding.

But despite the valour and military skill of the Ameer, the war in France was but rarely favourable to the Mosleman arms; the Christians regained many of their towns, and the task of maintaining the compacts made in that country became daily more difficult, seeing that he does but labour in vain who is struggling against the eternal decrees of God.

Now at this time Ben Alhegag Aseluli El Caisi was the Wali of Egypt, and by order of Caliph Hixem he passed into Africa, in the year 116, establishing his sons as governors in that country. Alcasim in Barca, and Ishmael in Sûs, that is to say. He likewise appointed his brother Ocba Ben Alhegag to be Ameer of Spain; but the latter was detained in Africa during two years and a half, by the great disturbances which took place in that part of the empire, seeing that the governor of Tangiers, Amer Ben Abdallah El Muradi, having inflicted heavy oppressions on those of his city and territory, the men of Barbary rose in revolt, and took possession of the town, being led on by Museir, a general of much bravery.

The troops sent by Ocba Alhegag having routed the rebels, and regained possession of the city, those barbarians, furious against their leader Museir, whom they accused of their defeat, fell themselves upon that general, and cut him

to pieces. They then elected Chalid El Zaneti in his place; for even yet those savage rebels found it possible to persuade a brave and able man to become their leader. Chalid went forth with his people accordingly, and giving battle to the Moslemah of Ocba, he defeated them entirely, dispersing the relics of the force throughout the land. In that struggle many of the most noble of the Arabs lost their lives.

This state of things made it no longer possible to continue sending those succours which the Ameer of Spain, Abdelmelic Ben Cotan, expected from Africa, and which he so pressingly required, neither were the troops which he did receive of the best kind: they were, indeed, men who proved themselves to be more covetous of spoil than desirous of glory. The most distinguished among the Generals in Spain were furthermore at enmity among themselves; the soldiers were injuriously affected by the prevalent vices, and all had made themselves bitter enemies among the Christian people.

Yet in the face of these many difficulties Abdelmelic passed the Pyrenees, and entered France, in the year 118; nay, the battles which he fought there were not unsuccessful; but the season had become much advanced, the rains began to fall, and the General returned to Spain. It had indeed, already become too late in the year for such a march, and the Mosleman army suffered cruel hardships in the difficult passes and wild regions of that mountainous country, where they were moreover encountered at disadvantage by their enemies, from whom they sustained an unexpected and most sanguinary defeat. These repeated misfortunes were all attributed by the troops to Abdelmelic Ben Cotan, whom they believed to have been born under an evil star, seeing that all his undertakings proved fatal to the Moslemah: and so was it represented to Caliph Hixem by the Wali of Africa, when the monarch commanded that Ocba Ben Alhegag should be sent as Ameer into Spain.

In this year of 118 died the governor of Egypt, Aben Rafie, and the Caliph appointed Abderahman Ben Chalid Ben Tabit El Fahêmi to be Governor in his stead; but Abderahman was deposed before the year had ended, and Hixem then gave the government to Hantala Ben Sefuan El Kelbi.

CHAP. XXVII.—GOVERNMENT OF OCBA BEN ALHEGAG.

WHEN the appointment of Ocba Ben Alhegag was made known in Spain, all the governors then ruling there trembled at his coming; the fame of his justice and severity had filled the country, and he had not well entered Andalusia before the good effects of his influence began to make themselves felt. He dismissed from their offices and employments the Alcaides and Generals accused of cruelty or avarice, and listened with beneficent attention to the complaints of the oppressed, who all found in his protection the aid they merited. He displayed equal zeal for religion and justice. The most unpardonable of crimes in the eyes of Ocba was that of those who, having been entrusted with a portion of the government, afflict those whom they should protect, and suffer a covetous regard for their own interest to prevail over the duty which they owe to the state; vices whereby they render the authority of those who rule them detestable to the nation ruled, and cause the dangerous disorders arising from discontent. Thus, the new governor filled the prisons with unjust exactors and extortioners of tribute, arbitrarily taken for their own profit, punishing severely whomsoever he found convicted of malversation as regarded the public revenues. He then established Cadis or judges in all the principal cities of each province, as also in the larger towns of the different districts, enjoining them to hear and conciliate the disagreements that might arise betwixt man and man; thus preserving the peace and quietude of families by their authority and discretion.

Ocba furthermore commanded that the Walis of provinces should despatch their Kaxiefes* to the pursuit of the robbers, by whom the rural districts, and less thickly inhabited parts of the country, were infested, and established a system of rigid repression for all such barbarians as should assemble for the commission of violence and misdeeds. He

* Kaxiefes or discoverers, as the name imports, were armed men, sent forth to seek and discover evildoers, as are the Quadrilleros or armed servants of the Holy Brotherhood.—*Condé.*

established schools in the towns for the instruction of the youth, endowing them with competent maintenance from the public treasury: he furthermore commanded the construction of Mosques, larger or smaller, as the occasion should demand, and to these he appointed readers and preachers, who were charged to instruct the people in the truths of religion. He caused an examination to be made of the proportions in which the dues of the state were paid by the various communes, and equalizing all, he abolished numerous distinctions which their cause and origin made odious, while the lapse of time had rendered them eminently unjust. Many persons were proved by this examination to have been guilty of imposing undue burthens on the people, and for that misdeed were sent in chains to Africa, by the Wali's command.

The Ameer Ocba was himself irreproachable on all points, and was therefore as much beloved by the good as he was dreaded by the bad and unjust. He caused an examination to be instituted into the conduct of the deposed Ameer Abdelmelic Ben Cotan, and not finding him in any manner blameable, he appointed him to the command of a body of cavalry, and ordering him to cross the frontier, gave him an opportunity for resuming his military service as before.

To fulfil the commands of the Caliph and his own decrees, Ocba then departed himself for the confines of France, proposing to enter that country, and entertaining the hope of making conquests therein; but when he arrived at Saragossa he received letters from Abdallah, the Ameer of Africa, giving him notice that the rebellion of the people of Barbary still continued to keep the country in a state of disquietude, they having moreover obtained certain advantages at that time, which had caused them to be more than ever bold and troublesome. Abdallah concluded by commanding that Ocba should return immediately, for the purpose of putting an end to those disorders and disquietudes.

Without hesitating an instant the Ameer retraced his steps accordingly: by precipitate marches he made his way to Cordova, and having assembled a select body of cavalry, he descended the river and passed over into Africa.

The departure of Ocba from Spain took place in the year of the Hegira 120.*

Arrived in Tangiers, Ocba assembled the Moslemen generals, and having held a Council of War he went forth against the rebels of Barbary. He routed many of their tribes who had set themselves against him, and dispersed others to the deserts, insomuch that before the succours despatched to them from Cairvan and Barca could arrive, numerous hordes of the rebels were destroyed.

The Spanish provinces had meanwhile been left under the care of the different Walis or Governors, Ocba having departed in the hope that his absence would be but for a brief space, and expecting quickly to return to his duties.

In the year of the Hegira 120, Caliph Hixem gave the government of Irak to Jusuf Ben Omar El Tzakifi, whose incapacity and arrogance were proverbial throughout the East, and in the following year this Jusuf was appointed Wali of Cufa and Bassora. It was in this year that Zeid, the son of Husein, and grandson of the Caliph Aly, appeared with his rebellious forces in Cufa, where he excited a rebellion, and prevailed on the people to swear obedience to his will. Jusuf meanwhile arrived with his troops and defeated the rebels, the populace making but a poor resistance, while Zeid himself lost his life in the struggle. The Governor of Irak then took the body of the dead leader, and having exalted it on a pole, he caused it to be burnt in the sight of the people, which being done he scattered the ashes of the rebel to the sea and sky. The head of Zeid he sent to the Caliph Hixem, who caused it to be nailed on one of the gates of Damascus.

The Walis left in Spain were meanwhile proceeding without union among themselves, and effected little of moment for the defence of the frontier,—still less for its extension; nay, rather, by their negligent and unjust proceedings, they provoked the people of the Northern Mountains to rebellion. On this occasion Abdelmelic gave unmistakeable proofs of his zeal and uprightness of intention, doing all that in him lay to avoid the evils of the discords prevailing, and to diminish their effects. With those under his immediate com-

* A.D. 737.

mand he routed and dispersed numerous bodies of the rebel Christians, leaving them no other refuge than the clefts and defiles of their mountains. Nay, Abdelmelic pursued the chase of those savage beasts even into their most concealed dens; and the destruction of some among them having intimidated the rest, he soon rid himself of their hordes, and compelled all to submission.

The same thing occurred in Africa, as the result of the zeal, activity, and intelligence displayed by Ocba Ben Alhegag; and since the large number of troops which had been assembled from Egypt and Syria were thereby rendered useless in that country, Oveidala Ben Alhegag thought it desirable to employ them elsewhere. He therefore despatched them to the conquest of Sicily, and conferred the command of that expedition on Habib Ben Abi Obeida Ben Ocba Ben Nafe El Fehri, who disembarked very happily in that island, which he brought into subjection. He then returned into Africa, where he arrived in the moon of the first Giumada, 103.

But how uncertain is the lot of man! This general, even Habib, who had come forth uninjured from so many battles fought in Spain and elsewhere,—who, as the known friend of Muza Ben Hoseir and his sons, had returned to Syria with no small danger to his head,—who had commanded so many perilous expeditions in Africa, and now returned victorious from the Sicilian fields—this Habib, I say, met his death in an onslaught made by the men of Barbary, before the year 103 had found its close. Who shall escape his destiny?

In this same year of 103, Oveidala quitted his government of Africa, and departed to Egypt. This Ameer had been ever more addicted to the study of letters than to the pursuit of arms, or the details of politics. He was a very elegant writer, and composed a history of the Arab conquests. In Tunis Oveidala built an Aljama, with extensive Docks, which last were much required for the construction and repair of ships. The year which preceded the departure of Oveidala, in 102, that is to say, died a distinguished Mosleman, Muslema Ben Abdelmelic Ben Meruân namely, the illustrious hero of the Beni Omeya race, a great general, a wise councillor, a learned man, and most active statesman: in his time there was none who could truly be called his equal, whether in his own family or in any other.

CHAP. XXVIII.—Of the return of Ocba to Spain, and of his death.

In the year of the Hegira 124, Caliph Hixem transferred Hantala Ben Sefuan from the government of Egypt to that of Africa, appointing Hafas Ben Walid to rule in Egypt in his place; and Hafas remained there accordingly until the Caliph Hixem's death. Over the land of Magreb, or the west of Africa, the same monarch appointed Coltum Ben Zeyad, who had once before held the government of that country, and from whom the Ameer Ocba Ben Alhegag received orders to proceed into Spain with his forces.

Ocba found all things there in great disorder; the Walis being much divided among themselves, as before related, and Abdelmelic Ben Cotan proving the only one among them who had preferred the public welfare to his own convenience and advantage. To him, therefore, Ocba wrote letters, thanking him for his zeal and good services; more especially for that he had so opportunely repaired to the frontier, and put an end to the dangerous disquietudes which had broken forth in those regions. Ocba furthermore assured Abdelmelic that he had written to the Caliph requesting that he might be assured in the government of Spain, which he had so well merited, and expressed the hope that Hixem would grant the request thus preferred. He also sent Abdelmelic an additional force of horse and foot, begging him to employ those troops in the maintenance of the frontier.

But in that same year the excellent Ocba fell sick at Cordova, and died of his malady; a very heavy loss for the Moslemen of Spain, and the more so as he had not had time to compose the differences of the Walies, and others among the principal commanders, who kept the country divided into parties and factions.

CHAP. XXIX.—Of the rebellion of Barbary against the rule of the Arabs, and of the arrival of Baleg in Andalusia.

The people of Barbary had formerly assembled, as has been related, under the leader whom they had chosen to command

them, even Chalid El Zaneti, and there went forth against them the Ameer Coltum Ben Zeyad in person. These forces met on the fields of Tunis, and there in a very sanguinary battle the general Chalid defeated and broke the Arab army, when Coltum the Ameer, with many other distinguished commanders on the Arab side, were killed in the hottest of the strife, for the carnage was a fearful one in both armies.

When the news of this defeat reached Egypt, the governor of Africa, before mentioned, even Hantala Ben Sefuan, commenced his march towards the seat of war with the utmost diligence, and soon appeared there at the head of a numerous army. This he did in the moon Regib of the year 125.

The rebels hearing that this great force had arrived, prepared to redouble their efforts; and encouraged by their first successes they had great confidence in their future good fortune. From all the Kabilas there came flocking a vast multitude of auxiliaries, both horse and foot; the aggregate forces being led by Chalid El Zaneti, Acâch of Masamuda, and Abdelwalim of Zanhaga, Moorish generals who were all of high reputation and well experienced in war. They fixed their camp on the banks of the river Masfa, and on those sandy plains these innumerable hordes looked not unlike immense flights of locusts; yea, such and so many did the black-visaged combatants of Sûs and Masamuda there appear. The Arab troops came to meet those bands, led on by their accomplished generals Thaalaba Ben Salema El Ameli, and Baleg Ben Baxir; the first having command of the forces from Syria and Arabia, the second of those from Egypt and Barca: Hantala Ben Sefuan commanded the provincial troops of Almagreb, or the West, those illustrious relics of the conquerors of that country.

Their ranks having been set in order, the two hosts met on that burning desert, and the war-cry sounded fearfully on the lurid air. Clouds of dust and arrows darkened the sun, and, rendering the day obscure, supplied a horrible shadow to those Sons of War. The burnished lances, thirsting for blood, intoxicated themselves in deep lakes thereof. The fury of demons raged on either side, and those who fought there, did scarcely seem to be men who were joined in battle,

but rather resembled fierce tigers and lions, who were furiously tearing each other to pieces. But the Arabian horses could not endure the burning heat of the day when added to the ardour of the fight, and they yielded the ground to the Moorish cavalry. These, hardy and indefatigable, remained masters of the sanguinary field towards the middle of the day, when, having broken and routed the Arab ranks, they beheld the warriors of Islam turn their bridles; then, pursuing them with unremitting eagerness, they destroyed large numbers amidst those deserts; such among the warriors as were acquainted with the country alone finding means to attain shelter in certain fortresses and defensible places. It is true that there still remained a small body of the bravest, who retreated, not in flight, but still fighting, and in good order, towards the sea-coast; and these troops, with their generals Baleg and Thaalaba, crossing over the Strait of Alzacâc, made good their passage into Spain, where they arrived in the middle of the year 125.

A short time previously Abdelmelic Ben Cotan had received his confirmation in the charge of Ameer of Spain from Hixem Ben Abdelmelic; and there soon afterwards came intelligence of the death of Caliph Hixem, who had died at Rusafa on the sixth day of the second Rebie, in the year 125. He was fifty-three years old, and had reigned nineteen years, seven months, and eleven days. Caliph Hixem was of the middle height, a good ruler, but very rigid in the exaction of tribute; he expended much treasure on things utterly useless, and had the mania of causing himself to be furnished with an infinite number of vestments; nay, there are those who affirm that six hundred camels could scarcely have borne the burden thereof; yet he would only use these garments very sparingly, and kept them so jealously guarded withal that it was with difficulty his people found one wherein to wrap him for the burial, seeing that the Caliph had laid all the chambers and wardrobes in which they were deposited under seal.

CHAP. XXX.—Civil war in Spain between Baleg and Aben Cotan.

Now Abdelmelic had appointed Abderahman Ben Ocba to be governor of Cordova, and had placed his own son Omeya Ben Abdelmelic in Toledo, while he remained himself at Saragossa. When intelligence of the arrival of Baleg Ben Baxir and Thaalaba Ben Salema, with the relics of their force from Africa, was brought to his presence, it was not without regret that he received this news; first, because he was grieved by the defeat which had been sustained by those leaders, and also because he dreaded lest disquietudes for Spain should be one of the consequences of their arrival. Abdelmelic set himself instantly on the march to repair to Andalusia, but at the same time he wrote to the two generals, desiring them not to leave the coast, but to hold themselves in readiness for a prompt return to Africa, whence the absence of their people and themselves must needs be much felt.

But those who were disaffected to the Ameer Abdelmelic, and they were not few, seized that occasion for putting enmity between him and the Walies Baleg and Thaalaba. These men also wrote letters on their side, therefore, exhorting the generals to give no ear to the commands of Abdelmelic, against whom they invited them to make common cause with themselves, and promised to be all of their party in the event of their opposing themselves to the orders of the Ameer. They declared that Abdelmelic was determined to be absolute in his command, but that all who were of any credit in the land had formed as firm a resolve to impede his designs.

The plan of revolt was soon laid, and the rebels determined to make themselves masters of Cordova and Toledo without loss of time. Their first attempt was on the last-mentioned city, which they besieged closely, and which was stoutly defended by Omeya Ben Abdelmelic for more than a month. Another body attempted to surprise Abderahman Ben Ocba in Cordova, and many assembled for the purpose of joining themselves to the generals arrived from Africa. Informed of these movements, Abdelmelic pressed forward

by forced marches, and arrived to the succour of Toledo at a moment when Omeya was very closely pressed, but the besiegers did not await his arrival, and precipitately raised the siege. Then the Wali Omeya, made aware of the cause of their flight, came out upon them from the city, when he gave them an unexpected and sanguinary defeat, pursuing and destroying large numbers of them in the disorders of the flight.

Perceiving the triumph of his son, Abdelmelic then directed his own force on Cordova, where the rebels had already suffered considerable loss from the son of Ocba, who had hastened on their track, and was even then employed in their pursuit. The dispersed fugitives joined the troops of Baleg and Thaalaba, when they formed altogether a considerable force: knowing that Abdelmelic was advancing to the succour of his friend, they prepared to go forth and meet him. But first informed by their scouts and spies that the body of troops led by Abderahman Ben Ocba was but a small one, they fell on that division, and the cavalry of Baleg Ben Baxir obtaining an important advantage, defeated and dispersed it. Inflated by that good fortune, the victors directed their march towards the Algarve, in which direction they expected to meet Abdelmelic, who was coming by way of Merida for the purpose of assembling the Lusitanian forces on his way.

Near Mertula the opposing armies met: they placed themselves in order of battle, with minds full of animosity, and no otherwise than might have done nations of different laws, languages, and manners. The troops fought during a great part of the day without advantage or inequality on either side, but the cavalry of Africa did finally defeat and throw into disorder the Moslemen of Andalusia, and a short time before nightfall the route of the latter became general. During the darkness they fled in various directions, Abdelmelic taking shelter in Cordova with a part of his cavalry.

From that place he wrote immediately to the Generals Baleg and Thaalaba, pointing out to them the unreasonableness of their conduct in thus taking part with the revolted Moslemen of Spain, and how much more suitable it was that they—people of one law and of one tongue—should assist and support each other, instead of enabling the rebels of Africa as

well as of Spain to take advantage of their discords and make good their own purposes, while they (the Moslemah) were inconsiderately destroying each others' lives. He bade them consider that the people of Spain had but recently been subjugated by force of arms, and following the example of those of Barbary, might now be tempted into an effort to avenge themselves, nor desist until they had recovered their liberty. To this Abdelmelic added the proposal that Baleg and Thaalaba should occupy the district of Gezira Saltis, until arrangements could be made for their return to Africa, which was highly necessary to the general welfare. Concluding these friendly proposals, Abdelmelic expressed his conviction that all the evils they were then suffering from had been the diabolical work of the rebels.

But these reasonings produced no good effect on Baleg and Thaalaba: from the peaceful dispositions of the Ameer, they did but infer timidity and weakness: regarding only what they considered their own interest, and inflamed by desires of vengeance, they marched with all the force they could make upon Cordova.

The people of Cordova, terrified at the tempest by which they were threatened, and dreading the cruelties of the Barbarians and Africans, believed that they should temper the rage of the victor if they delivered their Ameer Abdelmelic into his hands; and this they accordingly did. Fastening their benefactor, who was already severely wounded, to a stake, they presented him in this condition to the conqueror, who found him fixed on the entrance of the bridge!* The rebel Baleg instantly caused the head of the hapless Ameer to be struck off, and hung it on a hook over the gate of the bridge, and so finished the life of the noble Abdelmelic Ben Cotan in the year of the Hegira 125.†

Amidst the tumults and disorder which distinguished the conqueror's entry, the cowardly people of Cordova joined the troops of Baleg Ben Baxir in proclaiming their commander Ameer of Spain: but this did not please the General Thaalaba Ben Salema; on the contrary, offended

* Hear this, ye flatterers of the multitude, and do not forget that the noble victim of these base wretches was indeed their benefactor, and had used every hour of his meritorious life in their service.

† A.D. 743.

that Baleg should permit those popular evidences of preference for his person, he reminded his own troops that Baleg was nothing more than his equal, that the election of Ameer belonged to the Caliph alone, or could only be effected by his order and especial command to the governor of Africa, Hantala Ben Sefuan. He added that all then passing was a reprehensible license of the populace, and much to the discredit of those who, being able to repress it, neglected to do so. In conclusion he declared that, not wishing to lend a sanction to such disorders by his presence, he would that day put himself in order of march with all who would follow him.

Thaalaba departed accordingly, taking with him the greater part of the force under his command, very few of whom deserted his banners; and with these he proceeded towards Merida, every day adding strength to his party.

Meanwhile, Omeya Ben Cotan, the son of Abdelmelic, was found also to have a large party in the land, more especially in Toledo and Eastern Spain, where the Alcaides and governors of cities were for the most part the friends and creatures of his father: but the most earnest among all was the illustrious Abderahman Ben Ocba, who had taken a deep oath by heaven and earth to avenge the death of the wickedly murdered Abdelmelic, and exhorted every one within his influence to defend and assist the son of the lamented Emir with all their power. For this purpose he gathered together all the troops that were scattered throughout Andalusia, thereby securing to himself a considerable force, with which he proceeded to attack Baleg, and was the first of the leaders in Spain who made a demonstration against him. The departure of Thaalaba had much weakened the strength of Baleg, which consisted in no more than 12,000 men, when he sallied forth to encounter the troops of Abderahman Ben Ocba.

The place whereon they met was in the neighbourhood of Calat-Rahba; and Baleg, animating his people to the fight, declared that the enemy opposed to them was only worthy of their contempt, being nothing more than a collection of timid fugitives, the miserable remains of the army which they had previously beaten; he added that the men before them were still trembling as they thought of the edge of his

warriors' swords, the wounds made by which they had not yet had time to heal. Thus exhorted, the troops of Baleg fell on with indescribable fury, and those of Ocba received them with equal animosity: the carnage was terrible, and the fight was maintained with equal obstinacy by both sides. Baleg Ben Baxir, striking his enemies to right and left, went raging through the field as a lion among the train of hunters: he sought Abderahman Ben Ocba, and called his name aloud, until, hearing that sound, the noble avenger of the murdered Wali came forth with no less eagerness to meet him, exclaiming as he did so—"Here am I! behold the son of Ocba whom thou seekest!" They then fell upon each other with unimaginable fury, each giving his opponent fearful thrusts with his lance; but the horse of Abderahman proved more obedient to his hand than did that of Baleg Ben Baxir, and turning rapidly on his foe, the former drove his lance through the body of Baleg, piercing him from one side to the other: he thus bore him breathless to the earth, where he lay dead before the eyes of all. The loss of their leader did not fail to be felt by his troops, who were then soon defeated and put to flight, leaving the field of battle covered with corpses and dyed with blood. This victory obtained for Abderahman the surname of Almanzor: the battle took place in the year of the Hegira, 125.

The troops flying from that field of slaughter were not long pursued; those who escaped joined themselves to the forces of Thaalaba Ben Salema and Abderahman Ben Habib: that last-mentioned leader had taken part in the fortunes of Baleg Ben Baxir until the murder of Abdelmelic, when he had separated from him, and accepted a command in the army of Thaalaba Ben Salema, who was then proceeding towards Merida. The Wali of that city refused them permission to enter, and the two generals, resolved to obtain possession by force, commenced the siege of the town as foreign enemies might have done.

CHAP. XXXI.—Of the reign of Caliph Walid Ben Jezid, and that of his cousin and rival, the Caliph Jezid Ben Walid.

On the sixth day of the moon Rebie Postrera, or the last, which was that of Caliph Hixem's death, the nephew of the

departed monarch, Walid Ben Jezid Ben Abdelmelic, was proclaimed Caliph in Syria, at which time he had already completed the 40th year of his age. He deposed Hafas Ben Walid from the government of Egypt, and appointed Isa Ben Abi Atâ in his place. Now this Caliph Walid was an impious man, a despiser of all religious faith, and entered the territory of Mecca with his hunting dogs beside him He made good verses and was a lover of music; but he bathed himself in wine, abused his power in every way, and was given over to the dominion of his passions. Passing his time in diverting himself with his singers and slaves, he thought little of the dangers that threatened his empire; and in the year 126 was superseded by the common accord of the Syrian people; the latter then proclaimed his cousin, Jezid Ben El Walid Ben Abdelmelic, in his stead, and that Prince taking an eager part in the acts of the people, offered 10,000 gold doubloons to whomsoever should bring him the head of the deposed Caliph Walid, who was then at Tel-Rahita, in the neighbourhood of Damascus.

At the sight of the vast crowd which approached the palace with intent to destroy their late sovereign, all the generals and attendants of Walid abandoned him, when the populace scaling the walls, and soon penetrating to the apartments wherein their victim had taken refuge, cut him to pieces with indescribable barbarity. His hands and head they took to Damascus, and nailed them on the gates of the city; the remainder of the mangled and dismembered corpse was borne to the burial-place at the gate of the gardens and there interred. Hakem and Osman, the two sons of the slaughtered sovereign, were also seized and cast into prison, but as is considered probable, principally with the hope of thereby saving them from the effects of the popular fury.

It was on the twenty-eighth day of the moon of the second Giumada, and in the year 126, that Jezid Ben Walid Ben Abdelmelic was chosen Caliph, and his proclamation took place in the midst of the popular insurrection against his cousin the Caliph Walid. The mother of Jezid was Xahferinda, daughter of Firaz, and grand-daughter of Jezdegird, King of Persia.

Now the violent death of Caliph Walid filled all the provinces of the empire with troubles, even to anarchy. The

ambitious men of all nations are as the sea, which is always ready to rise whatever the wind that may blow: thus some took arms under the pretext of avenging the death of Walid and punishing the disloyalty of the Syrian people; others as pretending to approve and defend them; while not a few, availing themselves of the occasion presented by the confusion prevailing in the State, took that opportunity for gratifying their covetousness or satiating their vengeance on such as they deemed their foes. Wandering from city to city, armed bands of these miscreants then roamed over the land, slaying all that offended them without discrimination: for thus hath it ever been with the sons of man, and so shall it ever be, while his nature remains unchanged.

In the city of Hemesa, the people rose up as one man against the officers of the new Caliph Jezid Ben Walid, whom they declared to be a mere usurper, and to whom they refused all obedience. They closed their gates, and when Jezid sent an army against them, those of the city defeated his troops and put them to flight.

Suleiman Ben Hixem Ben Abdelmelic also, who had been cast into prison, then obtained his liberty, and putting himself at the head of those who refused to acknowledge Jezid, he took possession of the city of Naamana, which he permitted to be sacked by his troops as a recompense for their zeal and the good service they were rendering the State. He then departed with his followers for Damascus.

The people of Jardana, Palestine, and other parts, also rose that year under the same pretext, and most of them put their governors to death: Jezid himself deposed the governor of Irak, Juzuf Ben Omar, and appointed Manjûr Ben Giamhor in his place.

At the same time Meruan Ben Muhamed likewise declared against Jezid, whom he attacked under the colour and pretext of an obligation to avenge the death of Caliph Walid. Meruan was then in Armenia, where he assembled a large force, which he prepared to lead against Jezid; but the latter, by means of certain intermediaries, offering to resign to him the governments of Gezira or Mesopotamia, with Armenia, Mosûl, and Aderbijan, on condition that he should acknowledge his title to the throne, Meruan consented, and took the oath of allegiance to Jezid at Harran.

Caliph Jezid now thought fit to lower the pay of the

troops, and although this was a just act, yet it was performed at a most inopportune moment; many abandoned his party for no other reason, and leaving his bands, they attached themselves to the leaders who had refused him obedience. For this diminution of the soldiers' pay, Jezid received the name of Nakis, the sequestrator or diminisher: he died of the plague after a reign of five months, and at his funeral his brother Ibrahim made the customary prayer for the dead.

CHAP. XXXII.—Of the insurrections in Africa, and their suppression by Hantala ben Sefuan.

The continued discords and dissensions of the generals and Walis had now divided all Spain into factions and parties, nor could the cares and prudent counsels of the good Moslemah still remaining in that country avail to remedy those evils; the revolts in Africa, and those disturbances and disquietudes in the East respecting the Caliphate, of which we have just spoken, contributing not a little to exasperate the disorders in question.

Aggrieved by this state of things, the Ameer Hantala Ben Sefuan Ben Nufal El Kelbi, governor of Africa and the West for Caliph Hixem, and confirmed in that office by his successors, determined to attempt in person the reduction of the rebels in Barbary, and try if the weapons to be wielded would be more fortunate in his hands than they had been in those of his generals. Having therefore assembled a powerful army of 45,000 men, foot and horse, he set forth to encounter the insurgents.

They on their part assembled all their force; and their General Acach was despatched to meet the advancing army before it could reach Cairvan; while Abdelmelic, another insurgent leader, received orders to march on to Negiana and take the governor in flank. But the advanced guard of Hantala, rapid as the flight of eagles, gave him due notice of the rebel march, showing how they proposed to meet him with two bodies, and attack him by means of both on the same day and in one place. Hearing this, and perceiving how important it was that each of those bands should be taken separately, Hantala pressed his advance, and proceeding all

night, he arrived by forced marches within a short distance of the point selected by the rebels. He then detached a body of troops under the General Husam Ben Dhirar, to whom he had confided the command of his vanguard; and that officer, falling on Acach before the day had dawned, took him at complete disadvantage,—the rebel not expecting an assault, and being wholly unprepared to meet it. His people were, in fact, reposing in careless security; and before he could get them into order of battle they were routed, with great slaughter, by the forces of Hantala,—the victory being due to the zeal and energy of Husam Ben Dhirar, and to his promptitude in having fallen on the Moorish rebels without awaiting the day.

Pursuing his advantage without loss of time, Hantala took no further rest than was indispensable for the breathing of his men, but following the car of victory, proceeded at once towards Cairvan, and the rather as he was apprehensive lest Abdelwahib, another of the rebel leaders, who was approaching with innumerable hordes to the aid of the men of Barbary, should effect the junction they were meditating, before he could arrive.

The second battle fought by the Ameer Hantala was even more sanguinary and more advantageous to the Syrian Moslemah than had been the first, since it caused the utter defeat and destruction of the enemy, among whom there ensued a frightful carnage. The night, which alone caused the combatants to give truce to the horrors of the strife, was passed by the Arab conquerors on the field of battle, where they remained listening to the groans of the mangled and dying Barbarians; of whom the numbers that perished on that fearful day can be known to God alone. Among other bodies, that of the brave General Acach was found covered with wounds; when Hantala commanded that his head should be cut off and carried about the camp on a pike. Abdelwahid was also found dead on the field. The division commanded by the rebel Abdelmelic was advised by the fugitives from the first and second defeats of what had taken place, wherefore that general dispersed his forces, and betook himself to the mountains.

By these important victories, the revolts and disquietudes of the Almagreb, or West of Africa, were brought to a

close, and the whole district remained in subjection; but Hantala, knowing the warlike, restless character of the people, did his best to turn them into soldiers that might be useful to Islam; and since he had determined to send into Spain an Ameer who should tranquillize the country, by dispersing the parties and factions which menaced the ruin of that country, he gave arms and horses to all who were willing to pass the narrow waters, thus assembling nearly 15,000 Mangrebins, from the Kabilas of Zeneta, Masamuda, and Azuago,—all men of much energy and determination.

CHAP. XXXIII.—Of the election of Husam ben Dhirar to be Ameer of Spain, and of his rule in that country.

Now the more honourable men among the Moslemen of Spain had entreated Hantala to send them an Ameer who should reconcile the discords of the factions there raging, whether calling themselves Yemanies, Alabdaries, Syrians, or Egyptians; requiring that the general chosen should be a man of such prudence, that he should incline to no one party among them, but, declaring himself the determined enemy of all faction, should think only of the general good of the Moslemah and the people subjugated to their rule.

It then appeared to the Wali Hantala Ben Sefuan that this was the proper time for availing himself of the proved valour and excellent qualities known to be possessed by the General Husam Ben Dhirar Ben Suleiman El Kelebi, sometimes called Abulchatar, who had been proposed for that office to the Caliph Hixem, when the verses he had composed, in relation to the misrule of the Ameer Alhaitam, were recited to that monarch. It is true that there are those who declare that Husam had, in fact, been already elected,—and that so early as the year 122; these writers affirming that he was the fourteenth Ameer governing Spain, and held his charge four years and nine months. But it is certain that he did not arrive in Spain until the period we now speak of, when he came accompanied by the selected African troops before alluded to.

At the time when the new Ameer entered Andalusia, the General Thaalaba Ben Salema had taken possession of Merida, and was laying siege to the city of Cordova. On his march he had made incursions on all the neighbouring districts, had occupied numerous towns, and had treated with horrible cruelty all who ventured to resist him, or who did not furnish him with such provisions as he required, or such contributions as he imposed on them.

Now the inhabitants of Cordova, dreading the infliction of his accustomed cruelties, surrendered their city to Thaalaba on the best conditions they could obtain; but he, having taken a thousand prisoners of Alberbar, determined to intimidate the population by a fearful spectacle, and bringing forth those thousand captives on the day Juma,* he commanded that all should be put to death. The people had already assembled to witness the execution of that cruel sentence, when Thaalaba was suddenly informed that Husam Ben Dhirar, who had pushed forward at the head of a thousand horse, was on the point of arrival. Somewhat startled by that unexpected announcement, the general suspended the execution; and ordering the captives to be withdrawn, he went forth, with other generals, to meet the governor. To make his court to Husam, he then placed these thousand prisoners at his disposal, to the end that he might do with them as it seemed best to him. The Ameer received them accordingly, and commanded that all should be set at liberty, with permission to retire to their own homes or to join themselves to his bands from Barbary, as each might prefer. All the Moslemen applauded the generosity of Husam, who gave orders at the same time for the arrest of Thaalaba Ben Salema, whom he caused to be sent to Africa under a strong escort.

His next care was to bring the troops recently led by Thaalaba into quiet and good order. This accomplished, he furthermore made all due arrangements for the government of Cordova; and a few days afterwards departed, with the most select of his people, for Toledo, whence he displaced the General Abderahman Ben Habib, the companion of Thaalaba, with all those who were then calling themselves Ameers of Spain by their own authority alone. Those of

* Juma, or Giuma—Friday.

the party of Aben Cotan came of their own movement, and without any resistance whatever, to offer themselves to the service of Husam, who passed rapidly through the remaining provinces, gaining the respect of the Moslemah in all parts by his prudence and natural goodness, even more than by the fear inspired, or the force exhibited by those brave Africans who accompanied his march.

The Wali Husam considered the avoidance of all discord as the first and most important care of his government, and turned his most anxious thoughts towards the means for securing the quiet and tranquillity of the Moslemah dwelling in Spain. To this end he made a distribution of lands to the tribes of Arabia and Syria, which were the most powerful of those then in the country, and who laid claim to all the territory around the capital of Cordova, which was yet not sufficient for their demands; they consequently disputed among themselves, with infinite eagerness, for the possession of the same,—much evil arising from that competition. Hoping to put a term to these disagreements, the governor assigned to the Syrians and Veledies—Arabs established in the country—lands and dwellings in such regions as exhibited the most perfect resemblance to the character of their native homes. To those of Egypt and the first Veledies, for example, he gave settlements in Ocsonoba and Beja, placing the rest of the Arabs in the land of Tadmir,* while he settled the people of Hemesa, who were for the most part descended from families of high distinction, in the neighbourhood of Seville and Libla. To the men from the confines of Palestine the Wali gave dwellings in Sidonia and Algeziras, distributing the lands of Rayata to those of Alordania, and the district of Elvira to the people of Damascus. For the inhabitants of Quinsarina he found homes in Jaen, and for the people of Wacita in the

* This division of the lands of Tadmir (Murcia) confirms what has been said by El Pacense, when he affirms that "after the death of Theodomir he was succeeded by Atanaildo, a brave and noble man, who was rich and liberal even for those days, but that no long time after his accession he suffered heavy losses at the hands of the King Alhozza Alchatar, who laid on him a very heavy contribution." This Alhozza was the Wali Huzam Abulchatar, who divided Murcia as described, because he considered that the treaties made with Theodomir did not extend to the successors of that ruler.—*Condé.*

country of Cabra, giving settlements at greater distance to the Arabs from Irak and Cairvan. He furthermore assigned them a revenue composed of the third of the produce of such lands as were cultivated by the slaves of the Agemies,* taking great care to refrain from touching any portion of property which could be claimed by the first Arabs, or those of the conquered and their descendants, whom he left in full enjoyment of all their rights; and in effect not a particle of their possessions was abstracted.

When the tribes beheld themselves in the enjoyment of lands so closely resembling those they had left on their native soil, they could not sufficiently rejoice in their good fortune; and giving thanks to God, they did not cease to bless the memory of the Generals Muza Ben Noseir and Baleg Ben Baxir, to whom they considered their prosperous condition to be in part attributable.

There doubtless still remained some few malcontents,—more particularly among those governors of cities and provinces whom Husam had been compelled to remove from their offices in consequence of the complaints brought against them by the people; but this was inevitable; since the Wali was above all determined to relieve the oppressed tributaries, to render them content with their condition, and to deliver them from the oppressors by whom they had been crushed and devoured. Among those who considered themselves aggrieved by these measures, was Samail Ben Hatim Ben Xamri El Kelebi El Dhabei, who was called Abu Gaisi. He was the grandson of Xamri, a man of one of the noblest families of Cufa, who was one of the assassins of Huseir the son of Aly, and was the person who laid his head at the feet of Jezid Ben Moavia. For this cause, and when the time for avenging that murder had come, Xamri fled with his family to the confines of Syria, but was there slain by the avenger Mathar. The sons of Xamri had escaped, and entered Africa with Coltum Ben Ayad. The young Samail came to Spain, with the most important of the Syrians, at the time when Baleg Ben Baxir, who had commanded a portion of Coltum's forces, entered that country. Samail was a youth of much energy as well as prudence, and had

* These "Agemies" are probably the Goths.—*Condé.*

made himself head of the Egyptian party in Spain, which was opposed to the Yemeniya, or Arabs of Yemen, whom the discontented declared to be manifestly favoured by Husam Ben Dhirar.

But despite his illustrious birth, Samail Ben Hatim, having been reared at a period of revolutions, flights for life, and banishments, was altogether illiterate, and did not even know how to read or write. Yet he possessed the art of leading the multitude, was very prudent, as before remarked, and had a life-long experience of all things relating to war. It is, moreover, related of Samail Ben Hatim by Abu Becre Ben Alcutia, that he was constantly surrounded by wise and learned men, whom he consulted on all occasions; nay, that he was ever ready to hear advice, even from the humblest of the people.

Such was the person who considered himself the most aggrieved by the dispositions of Husam Ben Dhirar. He felt more particularly offended by the fact that the Wali had not conferred on him the government of Saragossa, which had been offered to him by Baleg. For all these causes, Samail did his best to keep alive the spirit of discord by means of his own partisans. In the beginning, the malcontents confined themselves to secret murmurs and complaints, but contempuous acts and disobedience to the commands of their ruler soon followed. Husam laboured to extinguish these sparks of mischief, before they should burst forth into conflagration, and so carry the fire of discord over all Spain, but his efforts were anticipated by the leaders and fomenters of the Egyption faction, and that of the Alabdaries, who took up arms, and again threw the country into confusion.

CHAP. XXXIV.—Of the reign of Caliph Ibrahim, and the civil war in Syria.

The Caliph Ibrahim succeeded to his brother Jezid, as Caliph in the East, on the day after the Id Aladheha, or Festival of the Victims. The name of his mother was Noama. Ibrahim was proclaimed by the partizans of his brother without either desire or repugnance on his part.

He had taken no share in the movement which placed him on the throne; the short period of his seat there was a very turbulent one; and his reign passed without advantage either to himself or his subjects.

In the year 127, Meruan Ben Muhamad arrived with his forces at Quinsarina, with the intention of proceeding to Damascus and seizing the reins of empire. The sons of Walid Ben Abdelmelic, Baxar, and Mansar, were at Quinsarina, and Baxar sallied forth against Meruan Ben Muhamad; but his soldiers abandoned him, and passed over to the army of Meruan. Baxar and Mansar being then taken prisoners, were thrown into a dungeon; while Meruan passed on to Hemesa, where he was well received by the people of the city, who took the oath of obedience to his rule. At Hemesa the army of Meruan was increased by more than 80,000 men, but that of Ibrahim consisted of 120,000. It was led by Suleiman Ben Hixem Ben Abdelmelic, who directed his march against Meruan Ben Muhamad without loss of time. The latter had given out, as a pretext for his movements, that their object was simply to avenge the death of Caliph Walid, and to set his two sons, Osman and Hakem, at liberty; but Suleiman paid no regard to his proclamations; and a sanguinary conflict ensued.

Very obstinate was the struggle, and there perished vast numbers on both sides; but Suleiman was at length compelled to yield, and fled before the face of the conqueror. Not a few of his officers fell into the hands of Meruan; but when that prince had compelled them to take an oath of obedience to the sons of Caliph Walid, he gave them their liberty without any other condition.

When Suleiman had reached Damascus, he took counsel with Ibrahim respecting the two princes Osman and Hakem, whom they decided to put to death; which was done in their prison accordingly. Suleiman then took all the gold and treasures that were found in the coffers of the Caliph, and divided them among the soldiery, for the purpose of inducing them to follow his fortunes. That done, he retired from the city.

Having arrived at Damascus, Meruan found the two princes dead, when he caused their funeral ceremonies to

be solemnized with much pomp. He furthermore caused Muhamed Xeibani, who had been taken with Osman and Hakem, to be brought from his prison, and Muhamad, on entering the presence of Meruan, saluted him by the title of Caliph, as did Jezid, the son of Suleiman, El Xeibani affirming that prince Hakem and his brother had declared him their successor, and that the former had uttered the following words: "If I and my natural successor should die, let Meruan be Ameer Amumenin," or Commander of the Faithful. Even the Caliph Ibrahim Ben Walid himself acknowledged Meruan as his lord, and abdicated in his favour, declaring himself deposed from the empire; and this declaration was accepted as an authentic act by all the people of Syria, who instantly proclaimed the new sovereign. Ibrahim reigned two months and a few days only, but lived to the year 132, when he was deprived of life by Nubuno, as some affirm, but others say that he was drowned in a river as he fled from the battle in which Abdallah of Alabas conquered Meruan. Ibrahim was a man of no energy, and little talent; his partizans call him sometimes Caliph of the East, but sometimes Ameer of Damascus only.

CHAP. XXXV.—Of the civil war between the generals Samail ben Hatim, Thueba el Hezami, and Husam ben Dhirar.

The Alabdaries and Egyptians, followers of Samail, were now overrunning the land as enemies, and exacting the contribution of blood from all those towns which did not come voluntarily to offer them obedience and service. Among the discontented Generals there then appeared Thueba Ben Salema El Hezami, who had performed great exploits in Africa against the men of Barbary.

The Wali Husam Ben Dhirar was at Beja, in the Spanish Algarve, when he received intelligence of the levy of troops by the generals above named, and of the acts of violence thus committed in disobedience of his commands and contempt of his authority. He was furthermore informed that Samail and Thueba had taken it upon them to declare him deposed, and were exciting against him both the people and the troops in all the provinces, gaining over the faithful among

the soldiers by false accusations against their benefactor, while they allured the more licentious by promises of plunder, and permission to rob and oppress the populace. Letters reached him from several of the honourable Moslemah, entreating him to proceed with the utmost wariness and caution, since his enemies were seeking to compass his death by whatever means they could find.

Desiring to reach Cordova and secure himself in that city, therefore, Husam commenced his march with a small body of cavalry on whose fidelity he could rely; yet his movements could not be made so secretly but that they became known to some who had sold themselves to the insurgents; and it so chanced that, as he passed through a ravine of the mountains, the Wali was suddenly fallen upon by an ambush of the Alabdaries laid to surprise him, and by whose light horse he was taken and carried to Samail and Thueba. The latter would then have had him beheaded without delay, but Samail would not consent to this, and they agreed to place him in a tower at Cordova, giving out that they did so in consequence of orders received from the Caliph, who had been informed, as they said, of his tyranny and excesses. The imprisonment of Abulchatar Husam Ben Dhirar took place in the year 127.

The discontented Generals then elected Thueba Ben Salema El Hezami, Ameer of Spain: he was of the Kabila Yemeni, a man of very determined character, and a good general.

Now at this time the Walies Aben Cotan and Aben Ocba were on the eastern frontier with only a small force, and that but poorly provided; the distance of that frontier of Eastern Spain had moreover caused them to remain unacquainted with all that was passing in Andalusia, except what the Alabdaries and Egyptians chose to tell them. When, therefore, the imprisonment of Abulchatar Husam Ben Dhirar was at length made known to them, they were at a loss to decide as to whereunto they should attribute that event, being well assured as they were of the rectitude, prudence, and good government of the incarcerated Wali. Desiring to be informed of the truth, therefore, and fearing the machinations of the Alabdaries, they sent a messenger in whom they could confide to Cordova, charging him to obtain information of

all that was passing, and to ascertain the true state of things, but more especially the cause of Husam Ben Dhirar's imprisonment.

This envoy presently discovered the ambition of Samail, the desire for vengeance of Thueba Ben Salema, and the malicious designs of those whose covetousness found its best gratification in the license of extortion permitted and authorised by times of war and revolt. These, as he assured the Walies Aben Cotan and Aben Ocba, were the true causes for the disobedience with which Husam Ben Dhirar had been treated, for his pretended deposition, and for the deplorable fact of his imprisonment.

When the return of their messenger to the frontier had thus made the Walies acquainted with the true state of things, they agreed, since the small number of their troops made it impossible for them to attempt any enterprise at that moment,—they agreed, I say, that Aben Cotan should proceed secretly to Cordova, and there endeavour, by means of his friends and partizans, to set the Ameer at liberty. But if, as was to be feared, he should find it impossible to make a party in Andalusia that should be strong enough to enable them to maintain the Ameer in authority there, it was decided that Husam should be brought to the eastern frontier, where the Walies Aben Cotan and Aben Ocba were at least not without influence, but had both authority and partizans.

Aben Cotan gained Cordova by rapid marches accordingly, and went to lodge himself in the house of Abderahman Ben Hassan, a general of much bravery, who was his friend. Here they conferred respecting the means to be adopted for setting Husam at liberty, and at length agreed to confide their proposal to thirty soldiers, on all of whom they could rely. Choosing the middle of a dark night, therefore, when all the city lay in the most profound repose, they approached the tower in which the Ameer was imprisoned; attacking the guards, they killed the greater part of them, and the rest fled in dismay, when, taking their way through the streets, they made themselves masters of the city gates before the dawn had appeared.

When it was known that the Ameer had been set at liberty, the inhabitants declared in his favour, and the assem-

bled youth took arms to guard and defend him; but the fugitives from the tower and others soon carried intelligence of what had passed to Samail, who appeared before Cordova a few days afterwards with a very considerable force.

Aben Cotan had meanwhile gone forth to the territory of Toledo, there to seek auxiliaries who might help him to maintain the party of Husam Ben Dhirar. The men of Cordova, on their part, kept the besiegers at bay, and defended themselves as they best might from the assaults of Samail Ben Hatim; while the whole territory of that capital was suffering from the incursions of the cavalry and other troops sent by Thueba to join the forces of Samail, and attempt to force an entrance into the city. The good Moslemah, confiding in the succours which Aben Cotan had gone to seek, were anxious to remain quietly within their walls, doing only what was needful to maintain their defence; but the hot and impatient youth began to murmur at their inaction, declaring that the Ameer had lost his valour in prison, and no longer exhibited his wonted intelligence in matters of war. Offended by these clamours, and desirous of disproving their truth, the Ameer sallied forth with a few select Yemanies; and meeting the troops of Samail, who did not expect their attack, they destroyed all before them: having done that, they retired within their walls, leaving the field covered with the wounded and slain." By this success the people of the city were much inflated, and numerous volunteers, among whom were Arabs, Syrians, and Africans, presented themselves for the purpose of attempting a second sally; whereupon the Ameer again went forth, leading that rash and inconsiderate youth.

But Samail had now given orders to the effect that, at the next sally from the tower, his troops should at once pretend to retreat, but still fighting, and by that feint should draw their opponents to a distance from their walls. A select body of cavalry was then directed to take position on the flank of the sallying force and cut off their retreat; all which was done. The people of Husam, following their Ameer, came forth to attack the besiegers, who retreated until they gained the point where the concealed cavalry sat prepared to fall on. That body then coming forward, the pretended fugitives turned, and together surrounding the

small force of Husam; they soon rendered all escape impossible. The Ameer fought with marvellous bravery, turning his horse to all points with a dexterity and force that few could have equalled; but in the hottest of the fight he fell pierced by the thrust of a lance. Of those who fought beside him scarcely any returned to the city, the greater number died on the field, but such as could escape carried in the grievous news that Husam, with the flower of his cavalry, had that day met his doom.

Thus finished the Ameer Husam Ben Dhirar; and this happened at the end of the year 127, or, as others say, at the beginning of the year 128. The people of Cordova then threw open their gates to Samail, attributing the resistance that had been made to the partizans of Abulchatar, and among others to the general Abderahman Ben Hassan and the Wali Aben Cotan, who were carefully sought that they might be given up to Samail; but they were not in the city, nor did they return thereto.

CHAP. XXXVI.—THE GOVERNMENT OF THUEBA EL HEZAMI, AND ELECTION OF JUSUF EL FEHRI.

FROM this day Thueba Ben Salema El Hezami retained his portion of the disputed authority without a rival, while Salema Ben Hatim departed to the government of Saragossa and Eastern Spain; so that these generals ruled the whole Peninsula between them, but with more regard to the maintenance of their respective factions than to the extension of the frontier or the general welfare of the country. The abandonment of the land to those two leaders was seen by all good Moslemah with dismay, since, by their example, the governors of provinces and generals of the frontiers were taught to consider the people as a flock of sheep belonging to themselves, and to be shorn at pleasure. Those subordinates consequently despoiled the tributary communes by every kind of extortion, having themselves no other occupation than that of wandering about in arms from place to place for the purpose of exacting undue tribute and disused contributions that could not be justly demanded. In these disorders the peaceful Moslemah suffered little less than

the Christians, and the discontent soon became general, every day that passed rendering the military government more intolerable.

The Governors of each province now desired no less than to be considered absolute and independent masters of all that their territories produced. The Walies of Andalusia pretended to claim obedience from those of Toledo and of Merida; but these last would acknowledge no authority either in Cordova or Saragossa. None thought of anything but increasing their own power and influence, to which end those who held authority did their utmost to gain over the Alcaides and Captains of the frontiers by granting them immunities of all kinds; while, on the other hand, every one of these separate authorities stood constantly ready to defend all he had been able to appropriate by acts of violence and the force of arms.

Spain was thus divided between the Yemenies, or Arabs of Yemen, the Egyptians, the Syrians, and the Alabdaries, but was without any legitimate governor or Ameer who should defend the people from oppression and maintain the rights of justice; yet the perpetual disquietudes still existing in Africa and the East made it impossible to hope that a remedy could arrive from those quarters.

Becoming sensible to the calamities resulting from this state of things, the most noble and honourable among the Arabs of the tribe of Cahtan, with others of Yemen, and certain Egyptians, wearied moreover by the ridiculous pretensions put forth by the conflicting Generals, proposed to hold an assembly for peaceful deliberation as to what could be done for the better security of the common welfare and the protection of the people. But there was much opposition made to this proposal, the private interests of those in power rendering them unwilling to sanction an assembly wherein there might be established such ordinances and new authorities as might tend to the limitation or disturbance of their own absolute sway.

Yet, after many difficulties, the Walies and principal generals did hold an Ayuntamiento, or Assembly, when all were persuaded by the old settlers of the Cahtanies and Egyptians, that the time was indeed come when they ought to elect an Ameer who should rule over them, with autho-

rity to exact obedience from the generals and governors of provinces. They declared that the state of the country demanded a firm hand for the maintenance of order in the cities, as well as in the more remote territories, and for the despatch of troops to the frontiers, all which belonged to the supreme authority, and ought to be entrusted to one capable of exercising the same with good effect. They added that the interest and well-being of the state imperatively demanded the arrangements they proposed, and affirmed that all were now prepared to lend their assistance to the support of such a rule as they desired to establish. They furthermore insisted that the man to be chosen must be one who had been at the head of no faction, and should on no account be a fervid partizan of any one among the numerous sects which now held the people in division.

The force of all these reasonings having prevailed, an Ameer was elected by common consent, and this was Jusuf Ben Abderahman Ben Habib, Ben Abi Obeida, Ben Ocba, Ben Nafe, El Fehri. He was of the tribe of Coraix, and, according to what has been written by Mohamad Ben Husam in his Book of Universal Genealogy, his descent was on this wise. Ocba Ben Nafe, the conqueror of Africa, was the father of Obeida, and Obeida was the father of Habib, whom he sent into Spain at the time when Abdelaziz Ben Muza Ben Noseir was deprived of life. This Habib was the father of the General Abderahman, who held command in Africa, and who was the father of Jusef El Fehri: the latter subsequently repaired to Spain, where he was held in much esteem for his nobility and virtues, as well among the Christians as the Moslemah: he had never raised his voice in favour of any faction, nor was he the rival or enemy of any one among the leaders. Aben Hayan, who gives an account of this general assembly in which Jusuf El Fehri was chosen Ameer of Spain, informs us that the affair took place in the Moon Rebie Segunda, and the year of the Hegira 129.*

All Spain applauded the choice that had been made of an Ameer, and the people were now full of hope. Thueba Ben Salema had died a short time before this election—in the end of 128, that is to say; and Samail Ben Hatim, Ben

* A.D. 746.

Xamri, with Ameer Ben Amru, El Coraixi, Chief of the Alabdaries and Ameer of the Sea-Coast of Spain, though both secretly displeased, did not permit their discontent to appear, because they saw that the excellent qualities of Jusuf were as the sun, which causes all the lesser stars to lose their light as he comes forth. Jusuf, meanwhile, gave the government of Toledo to Samail Ben Hatim, and that of Saragossa to the son of Samail, doing this in consideration of the merits of Ben Hatim Ben Xamri, of his noble virtue, and of the place he held in public opinion, as well as to moderate, by this manifestation of honour and esteem, the displeasure which Ben Hatim might be feeling in his heart.

The communication between Spain and Africa or Syria being no longer of its earlier importance, Jusuf suppressed the office of Ameer of the Sea, which had been held by Amer Ben Amru, to whom he gave the government of Seville in its stead. Not a little inflated was the pride of this Amru by the fact that he was the great-grandson of Mosab, the Standard-bearer of the Prophet at the battle of Bedre: he was an exceedingly rich man, and very powerful; he had constructed a magnificent palace immediately without the walls of Cordova and on the east of the city, with a spacious cemetry, which is called by his name to this day, and is situated in front of the city gate, on that same side with his palace. Numerous were the partisans of Amer Ben Amru, and great his importance, but still greater was the ambition of the man,—and thus he did not long hesitate to attempt once more disturbing the peacefnl calm established with so much difficulty, and needful to the welfare and good government of Spain. Truly is it affirmed that the ambitious are as the sea, which is ever unquiet, and which the lightest wind suffices to put in movement.

CHAP. XXXVII.—Government of Jusuf el Fehri, and division of the provinces of Spain.

The new Ameer Jusuf made careful visits to his provinces, heard all the complaints of the people, placed new governors wherever they were required, and removed many, who had been convicted of cruelty and injustice, from their posts. He

commanded the restoration of the military roads leading from Andalusia to Toledo, Merida, Lisbon, Astorga, Saragossa, and Tarragona,* with the repair of the bridges which had been destroyed in the prevalent disorders, the Ameer supplying the means for these reparations, and for the maintenance of the Aljamas, by an assignment of one-third of the revenues of each province.

Jusuf likewise caused exact registers to be taken of all the townships in Spain, and divided the whole dominion, which, according to the division made by the Ameer Ocba Ben Nafe, as also in the time of the Goths, had consisted of six portions, into five provinces. The first is that of Andalusia, formerly called Bœtica, from the river Bœtis, because watered by that river from its source to its junction with the sea, with the addition of all between the first named stream and the river Guardiane,—the whole space enclosed within these two rivers, that is to say, from their rise in the mountains to their fall into the ocean. The principal cities of this province were Cordova Carmona, Exija, Silia-Italica—a city near Seville, and the ancient seat of the Eparcos of Spain†—Sidonia, Arcos, Libla,‡ Malaga, Elvîra, Jaen, Arjona, Cabra, Balcona or Obulcona,§ Artaba, and Assuna, with others of less importance, depending on the greater towns and within the jurisdiction of the same.

The second province was that of Toledo, which was in earlier times called Carthagena: it extended from the eastern declivities of the mountains of Cordova and Castolona, comprised all the vast space between them, and took

* Our author has a note respecting the names of towns here given and to follow hereafter, of which he says that he has thought it desirable to leave them in the corrupt forms given by the Arabians, but will rectify all in the Geographical Index to be appended to his work. The lamented death of the learned and estimable Condé has prevented us from receiving that Index: it is not in the Spanish original of the work before us; and the translator has therefore thought it well to rectify the words in the text, without further reference to notes, which on this occasion would be but of little value.

† Now ruined, and become a poor village.—*De Marlès.*

‡ Now Niebla.—*Id.*

§ "Now Porcuna," says Signor Condé; "a corruption of Obulcona," and "for the origin of which there is no need to rave," remarks our author, "about Roman inscriptions and the sacrifice of pigs."

in all the north from Gibel Axarat and behind the hills of Guadaramla to the mountains beyond the river Douro, in the direction taken by that stream as it flows from those acclivities—and towards the east even to the hills whence the Douro takes its rise,—extending towards the south even to the Sea of Syria. Its principal cities were Toledo, Ubeda, Baysa, Baezta, Murcia, Bocastia, Mula, Lorca, Orihuela, Elixe, Xativa, Denia, Alicante, Carthagena, Valencia, Segovia, Segorba, Guadalaxara, Siguënza, Cuënca, and Oxuma; with other towns belonging to the districts of the principal cities.

The third province was Merida, and had formerly been called Lugidania or Gallicia; it extended from the western bank of the Guadiana to the ocean, and was bounded toward the north by the coasts that are bathed by the British Sea. Its principal cities were Merida, Beja, Lisbon, Astorga, Zamora, Coimbra, Salamanca, Evora, and some others, with small towns appertaining to their jurisdiction.

The fourth province was Saragossa, anciently called Celtiberia, extending from the eastern slopes of the Mountains of Ercabica, where the river Tagus has its source, taking in all the east of Spain, and passing along both shores of the Ebro, even to the Pyrences and the Basque mountains. Its principal cities were Saragossa, Tarragona, Gerona, Barcelona, Urgel, Lerida, Tortosa, Huesca, Calahorra, and some others, with those dependent towns of the district which belonged to the territory of the various cities.

The fifth province was that of Narbona, in the land of Afranc, and extends from the eastern side of the Pyrenees, taking in all between those mountains and the sea-coast, even to the river watering the city of Nismes, and which falls into the Rhone. It was the frontier-land, and had to be laboriously maintained against the people of Afranc. Its principal cities were Narbonne, Nismes, Carcassonne, Beziers, Agada, Maculona, Elene or Helene, Collioure, &c., with some of less note, which appertained to the jurisdiction of those mentioned.

To the frontiers of Afranc the Ameer Jusuf sent his son Abderahman, called Abulaswad, with whom he conjoined El Ocaili, the cousin of Samail Ben Hatim, who was general of the Syrian troops, and Suleiman Ben Xiheb, who led those

of Egypt,—their commission being to subjugate the rebels who had taken the opportunity afforded them by the dissensions of the Moslemah, and having risen in great force, had thrown all the frontier into confusion.

CHAP. XXXVIII.—Of the reign of Caliph Meruan the last of the Omeyan sovereigns of the East.

Praised be Thou, O God the Lord, the Master of empires —Thou who givest the sovereignty thereof to him whom Thou hast chosen—who honourest whom Thou hast decreed to honour, and humblest him whom it is Thy pleasure to humiliate. In Thy hand are the good and the evil; and Thou art the mighty Lord of all things.

Now it had been ordered in the eternal decrees that at this time the happiness and dominion of the Beni-Omeyans in the East should come to an end. The last Caliphs of this line, Jezid and Meruan, despised and contemned those slight glimmerings of rebellion which were nourished by the Beni Alabâs under various pretexts,—and this they ought not to have done. But they disregarded the warnings given them, and did not lend ear to the advices that might have been their salvation. Nor was any attention given to the excellent verses sent by the General Nasir Ben Seyar to the Caliph Meruan, and which were as follows:—

Beneath the ashes cold I saw bright sparks,
And much I fear lest these should burst to flame,
If in good time no prudent hand be found
To quench their dangerous heat.

And what the flames ensuing shall devour
Will not be mount or wood, but lines of men
Swallowed insatiate by the conquering fires.

Then spake I, as that vision grieved mine eyes,
"Who shall divine what soon may come for thee,
If now the heirs of great Omoya sleep,
And rouse not to the watch?"

And as the verse suggested, so did it fall out. Kindled by the insidious breath of Abu Muslema, the flames of dis-

cord burst forth, and the State was quickly involved in the ruinous consequences. Civil war was openly declared, and, as if to facilitate the destruction of the ancient house of Omeya, its principal column and support, the Wali Nasir Ben Seyar now died, when all the hopes of the State died with him. This happened in the year 131; and at that perilous moment Caliph Meruan deposed Guayara Ben Sahli from the government of Egypt, appointing Abdallah Ben Magbara in his place; but that Wali also died almost immediately afterwards. Meruan then sent Abdelmelir, son of Muza Ben Noseir, to assume the government, and confirmed Abderahman Ben Habib in his office as Ameer of Africa, although he was holding that charge by his own authority alone. The Caliph also appointed and confirmed the election of Jusuf El Fehri as Ameer of Spain; but whether because he really had confidence in that governor, or that he dissembled his displeasure because he had not power to prevent what had been done, hath not appeared. In almost all the provinces the governors were at that moment rebellious; and the few who desired to oppose their disloyal proceedings were vanquished. The Alcaides of the cities, trimming their sails as the wind blowing them good fortune seemed to vary, gave up the towns they governed to the victorious rebel Abdallah Abulabas Asefah, to whom they were resigned, even before he had found time to demand their surrender, while all offered themselves to his service and went over to his standard. Thus it was that the violent assumption of the Caliphate by Abdallah Abulabas Asefah was facilitated, and ultimately rendered secure.

But more particularly by the bravery and promptitude of his Vizier, Abu Muslema, it was that Abdallah was proclaimed, and this was done without loss of time—so precious a treasure on such occasions. The new sovereign despatched his uncle, likewise called Abdallah, with a numerous army to attack the Caliph Meruan. The two hosts met at Turab, near Musul: the battle was a sanguinary one, and more than 30,000 men fell dead at the defeated Meruan's side. The conquered Caliph then fled, while of his people, the few who escaped from the field were drowned in the river Forat;* and ther

* Euphrates.—*Condé.*

it was that, according to some of the Arabian authors, the deposed Caliph Ibrahim died, having been among those who were drowned in attempting to cross the river. O mystery of the eternal decrees of heaven! Ibrahim dies fighting to preserve the empire to him by whom he had himself been deposed!

The unhappy Meruan escaped to Quinsarina, but was closely pursued by Abdallah and the flower of his cavalry; wherefore the fugitive departed to Hemesa, not thinking himself secure in the first-named city, as indeed he was not, for the unfortunate never can be secure even though he climb to the nests of the eagles, and conceal himself on the summits of inaccessible rocks; neither shall he avoid the arrow of the powerful destiny, although he should rise to the stars. The people of Hemesa received Meruan well in the first instance, but when they were made acquainted with his defeat, and the deplorable condition of his affairs, they compelled him to leave their city and declared for his enemy. He then repaired to Damascus, but not having confidence in his security there, soon passed into Palestine, and was overtaken near Alardania by the Caliph Abdallah, who followed him as doth the hungry leopard the timid gazelle. A struggle then ensued, in which the people of Abdallah were repulsed—for so much can the force of valour effect when driven to despair. Offended by this reverse of fortune, and much disappointed at the defeat he had sustained, the new Caliph Abdallah Asefah deprived his uncle Abdallah of the command of the troops, and committed the pursuit of Meruan to Saleh the brother of Abdallah.

But Meruan was still persecuted by his evil fortune. He fled to Egypt with such of his people as would follow him; but these were not in great numbers, and Saleh came fast upon his traces. At a country palace near Saida, called Busir-Coridas, the deposed Caliph was overtaken by his enemy, and on the twenty-seventh day of Dylhagia, in the year 132, the two opponents met in battle. The troops of Saleh had all the advantage, and those of Meruan made but a slight resistance, seeing that Meruan himself fell dead in the commencement of the fight. Historians relate that a vile follower of the camp, known as a seller of pomegranates on the market-place of Cufa, tore the head of the slain prince from

his body and presented it to Saleh, when he, having first caused the brain to be removed, sent it embalmed to his cousin the Caliph Asefah, who was at that moment occupying the palace of the Caliphs at Cufa.

Now in the process of embalming the head of Meruan, the tongue had been removed, and being neglected for a moment, was suddenly carried off by a ferret or weasel. This was considered an appropriate punishment for the many impieties which Meruan was in the habit of uttering; and so is it declared to be by Saleh in the letter and verses which he sent to the Caliph on that occasion: these were to the following effect:—

To thee God gives the victory and triumph;
To Meruan, the rash and impious,
Death on Egyptian plains.
And see the price paid by the tongue that dared
So oft blaspheme the skies!—Become the prey
Of vilest brute; 'tis mangled and devoured!

Thus do we clearly see the fate reserved
For impious tyrants by the Lord of all;
And how His justice ever castigates
The scorner of His will.

Saleh then returned into Syria, leaving the government of Egypt to the general Abu Aunila. When the head of Meruan was presented to the Caliph Asefah, he prostrated himself on the earth and gave thanks to God for the death of his enemy. The sons of Meruan fled into Ethiopia, where Obeidala was killed in a contest with the Negroes, while his brother Abdallah, escaping with a few followers, went wandering about through divers countries, till he fell into the hands of the governor of Palestine, Nasrû Ben Muhamad Ben Alaxat. This happened in the Caliphate of Almehdi, and Ben Alaxat despatched his prisoner to that sovereign.

The family of Meruan, his wives, his daughters, and his slaves, were brought to Saleh, who sent them to the city of Harran, where Meruan was accustomed to hold his court for a part of each year. The unhappy women, entering that beautiful town, and once again beholding its splendid palaces

and delicious gardens, could not restrain their grief, and weeping sorrowful tears, they vainly deplored the sad destiny which their evil stars had allotted to them.

When Meruan died he was 62 years old, and had reigned five years, ten months, and fifteen days; he was of the middle stature, had a fair complexion, clear blue eyes, a thick, well-grown beard, and very majestic expression of countenance. He possessed considerable ability, was brave in arms, and prudent in counsel; but when fortune had turned her back on him, his reign and the days of his felicity being at an end, he could do no otherwise than finish his days in suffering and sorrow, nor could either his valour or understanding then avail him. He was surnamed Abu Abdelmelic and Alhemarû, and was sometimes called El Giadi because he held the opinion of the Algiades, who affirm the Koran and Destiny to be but the inventions of men: his mother was a woman of Kurdistan. Meruan was the last Caliph of the Omeyan race who ruled in the East, and of whom there were fourteen.

And here it may not be amiss to give the names of these sovereigns, with the period of the reign of each. The first was called Moavia Ben Abi Sofian: his empire endured nineteen years, three months, and twenty days. He was accustomed to say that princes are the good and evil fortunes of men in this world, since they exalt and aggrandize whom they please, and in like manner whom they please they abuse and humiliate. The second was Jezid, son of the above-named Moavia; he reigned three years and six months. The third was called Moavia, and was the son of Jezid Ben Moavia; he reigned three months, or as others say, but forty days. The fourth was named Meruan Ben Hakem; he was Caliph nine years and eight or ten days. The fifth was called Abdelmelic; he was the son of Meruan; his reign was of three years and four months, wanting seven days. The sixth, called El Walid, son of Abdelmelic Ben Meruan Ben Alhakem, was very fortunate in all his undertakings. In his time was made the conquest of Spain; he adorned the city of Damascus with magnificent edifices, and his fortunate reign lasted nine years and seven months. The seventh was Suleiman, son of Abdelmelic, who was Caliph four years and

eight months. The eighth was called Omar Ben Abdelaziz; he reigned two years and eight months. The ninth was Jezid Ben Abdelmelic, who reigned four years and one month. The tenth was called Hixem Ben Abdelmelic; his reign continued during nineteen years, nine months, and nine days. The sons of this Caliph passed into Spain, being persecuted by the Caliphs of the Beni Alabas line, and in that country the sons of Hixem established their power. The eleventh, who was called Walid, and was the son of Jezid Ben Abdelmelic Ben Meruan, reigned one year and three months. The twelfth, named Jezid, was the son of Walid Ben Abdelmelic, and was called Nakis by the soldiers because he had diminished their pay; he reigned five months and twelve days. The thirteenth was called Ibrahim; he was the son of Walid Ben Abdelmelic, and brother of Jezid El Nakis: he reigned four months, or, as others say, seventy days, and was then deposed, but did not die until some years later, when he was drowned in the river Azabo or the Euphrates, when Caliph Meruan was defeated, as we have before related. The fourteenth and last of the Omeyas was named Meruan; he was the son of Muhamad Ben Meruan Ben Alhakem, and was surnamed the Giadi: he reigned five years, ten months, and fifteen days, and having lost his army in Egypt, he there died himself, bravely fighting in defence of his throne.

CHAP. XXXIX.—Of other tragical events that befel the Beni-Omeyas after the death of Meruan.

We now proceed to relate the sorrowful events that befel the Beni-Omeyas after the death of Meruan, the persecutions they endured, and the death they died—all in the order of time.

The historiographers inform us that the empire of the Omeyas in the East having finished with the death of Meruan, there then remained of that family Sulciman, son of Hixem Ben Abdelmelic, the tenth of the Omeyan Caliphs, who found not only security, but favour and special honours at the hands of the Caliph Asefah, as did his brother Abderahman, both being well received at court until the malignity of certain

courtiers had evoked an evil influence against them. Among their calumniators was one called Sodaif, and this man, incited by some ancient grievance against the Omeyas, or desiring to flatter the Caliph and his connections, one day entered the presence reciting the following verses :—

Never believe thine eyes, for these may show thee
A false appearance; oft beneath the arm
Lies hid the hand that soon shall work us woe;
But the good sword mends all, and to that end
Thou hast one at thy side. Wouldst thou be safe
Lose not the time, and let no sun arise
Until from off the wide extent of earth
All trace shall vanish of Omeya's line.

When the Caliph heard these verses, his heart being already and at all times much disposed to cruelty, he sent orders for the instant death of Suleiman Ben Hixem, but Abderahman the brother of that prince being absent, did not share his fate. At the same time certain cavaliers of the family of Omeya had taken shelter in the court of Abdallah Ben Aby, uncle of the Caliph Asefah, where they were very honourably treated. We find it related that there were no less than ninety of these cavaliers who had all been invited to a feast, and being about to seat themselves at table with the uncle of the Caliph, there entered into the hall of their assembly a certain Xiabil Ben Abdallah, a freed man of the Beni Haxiam, who recited the following verses to the prince, even to Abdallah Ben Aby :—

To the proud summit of its highest bliss
Your star hath now attained: its light benign
Gladdening the fair land, Oh ye Alabazes,
Noble and true. Nor is the glorious lot
Whereat the world rejoices more or better
Than Abdel Haxiam's* high deserts should claim.
Yea! Fate is now propitious; but that Fate,
How changeful is its mood! Now it casts down
Whom it again exalts: and shall this be
The lot of false Omeyas?—of that brood,

* Abdel Haxiam was the founder of the Alabazes or Abasside race.

Ever-accursed, the sons of Abdelxiamsi?*
No! such injustice cannot be,—the earth
Would not endure it. Let their fate press heavy
On all the race, and let no branch survive
Of that most evil trunk, lest its dark shade
Should one day blight the land. If any live
Who would uphold it, let them perish too;
For know, they hold sharp glaives against thy heart—
Swords that are merciless and thirst for blood.

We who do love thee therefore, and to whom
Thy safety is as life—we groan to see
The honours they receive, thus feasted high
Beneath thy roof, and by thyself esteemed
As worthy of thy presence. Yet bethink thee
God hath abased them; wherefore, then, art thou
Now lifting high their heads? Bid them depart;
Let not a trace remain beneath thy roof
Of those whom now it shelters to thy harm.

Hast thou forgotten then the mournful doom
Of Huseint and of Zaydi.‡ Hast thou lost
All memory of those who in their beds
Were foully torn from life? Or of the Prince§
Whose mangled corse, dragged through the public ways,
Was made the scorn of all, and still cries Vengeance!
Vengeance! and ever Vengeance!

Then Abdallah, the uncle of Asefah, commanded that the ninety Omeyan Cavaliers there in presence should be scourged with rods until they died, which was instantly done; and when all had fallen expiring on the floor, the carpets were drawn over them, and those who were to have been their fellow-guests were called on to eat their food on the horrible tables formed by their bodies, merely covered by those carpets; the groans of the hapless sufferers filling their ears as they ate.

* The founder of the line of Omeya.

† An ancestor of the Caliph Asefah, who was put to death by order of Jezid, the second of the Omeyan Caliphs.—*Conde.*

‡ This prince was conquered in battle and put to death by the Omeyan Caliph Hixem Ben Abdelmelic, when his body was fastened to a stake, where it remained exposed during all the reign of Hixem. —*Idem.*

§ The brother of Caliph Asefah, also a victim of Omeyan cruelty. —*Idem.*

Not content with this abhorrent cruelty, Abdallah caused the tombs of the Caliphs who had been buried in Damascus to be opened, and drew thence the bones of Moavia Ben Abi Sofian, of Jezid his son, of Abdelmelic Ben Meruan, and of Hixem Ben Abdelmelic. The latter he found still entire, and this body he caused to be fastened to a stake and exposed to the public derision of all who desired to flatter the reigning family. He then commanded that the remains should be burnt, and the ashes scattered to the winds. Inhuman vengeance exercised against the dead! And in the same spirit Abdallah persecuted every member of the family and royal house of Omeya, resolving that none should be suffered to escape, whether great or small. With equal cruelty did Soliman Ben Aly, another uncle of Caliph Asefah, pursue that unfortunate race. He put large numbers of them to death at Bassora, and caused their bodies to be thrown out into the open fields, permitting none to bury them, to the end that they might be devoured by the wild dogs and birds of prey. Those who found means to escape did so in disguise, and were then compelled to wander as vagabonds through different parts of the world.

CHAP. XL.—Of the civil war between the Arab generals in Spain.

During this time the Ameer of Spain, Jusuf El Fehri, was making himself respected for his justice by the upright man, and dreaded for his severity by the evil doer, although there were not wanting those who, being his rivals and jealous of his power, declared that his justice was awakened only against his opponents or enemies; they affirmed that for his friends and those of his own house his cup was ever filled with honey, while for all beside, the beakers were made to overflow with bitter wormwood.

The most dangerous among those who were disaffected to the rule of Jusuf, was Ameer Ben Amru El Coraixi, a general who was the head of the Alabdaries, seeing that by his vast possessions and many alliances with the most illustrious houses in Spain he possessed very great influence. He was at feud with Samail Ben Hatim, the Wali of Toledo,

and also with the son of Samail, who held the government of Saragossa, considering himself to have been offended by both, but principally because he too had solicited and expected some one of those great appointments, and, finding his pretensions disregarded, had become angry with those who had received such; in the hope of displacing them he now therefore began to foment seditions and civil discords. In the year 132 Amer Ben Amru won over many of the Alcaides by presents and promises, when the districts under their command soon began to give evidence of disorder and discontent.

The Ameer of Spain was not without apprehension of these seditious machinations, and was careful to observe Amer Ben Amru's proceedings very closely, fearing lest his great riches and the credit he enjoyed might eventually prove fatal to the repose and welfare of the country. And at this time there fell into the hands of Jusuf, a letter which Amer Ben Amru had written to the Caliph, and had entrusted to one of his freedmen, a Syrian, who had given it up to the Ameer; for these people are ever light and faithless, their natural covetousness perpetually stimulating them to attempt the securing of some new gain: thus this man, being well paid for delivering to Jusuf the letter which had been confided to him, then pretended to pursue his way into Egypt, bearing the same to the Caliph, as Amer Ben Amru had commanded him to do.

In this letter Amer had written to the effect that Jusuf was governing Spain as if he were the absolute master of the country, his friends and himself dividing the land among them as men do their patrimonial inheritance. He added that the name of the Caliph was not heard in Spain, nor was any man bound to pay him obedience, declaring further that his own zeal and respect for the authority of the Commander of the Faithful had induced him to transmit the intelligence conveyed in the letter, which he sent to the end that his sovereign might provide a remedy, for the evil signalised therein. The paper concluded by an assurance that the Caliph might rely on his own devotion and that of his partizans, who were numerous and powerful, but that he must not confide in Samail Ben Hatim or any of his house, since that family and every member thereof were

all taking part in the tyranny and misgovernment of Jusuf El Fehri. This letter the Ameer of Spain made known to Samail and his son, when they all agreed that it was necessary to secure the person of Amer Ben Amru, and even to put him to death, if no other remedy could be found.

Samail Ben Hatim was at this time inhabiting his palace in the city of Secunda,* and knowing that Amer Ben Amru was to pass near that city with a considerable number of his partizans, he commanded that certain cavaliers of his company should proceed to a given distance on the road, and, meeting him as it were by chance, should bring him to Sigüenza, either by persuasion or force. The messengers of Samail went forth accordingly, and seeing that the followers of Amru were in the greater number, they saluted him courteously with many indications of friendship, inviting him to their houses and emulating each other in offers of hospitality.

Not suspecting that his machinations had been discovered, Amer accepted these offers, and having arrived at Sigüenza, was conducted with his principal followers to the palace of Samail. He had even sat down to supper, when the voices of those among his people who had remained without, reached his ears, and he found that attempts were making to disarm them. Springing to his feet with marvellous agility, Amer drew his sword, and forcing a passage through all that would have opposed him, he fought his way across the courts of the palace; then mingling himself in the confusion with those who stood looking on, he escaped with a very few of his people, all the rest having died in the struggle.

Vainly did the followers of Samail then seek to pursue his traces; lighter is the foot of the fugitive than of him who pursues; but the consequence of this attempt was that war broke forth immediately, and the faction which had before existed in private was now openly declared. Amer assembled his partizans, and burning with the desire of vengeance, they all hastened to take arms. We find it affirmed by some writers that Amer Ben Amru had received notice of what was intended against him a few moments

* Condé says in a note, "This may be Sigüenza:" and for Sigüenza we have taken it throughout the preceding pages, where it has been more than once mentioned.

before seating himself at table,—a single word having been whispered to him by Alhebab his secretary, who was of the Beni-Zahira, and hearing expressions from the household of Samail Ben Hatim, which caused him to suspect adverse intentions, he had intimated as much to his master. The agents of Amer then appeared in all parts, exhorting the people to take vengeance for the blood of so many noble Arabs treacherously shed in the city of Siguënza, a place which, as they declared, was ever after to be held in horror by all good and honourable Moslemah.

And of a truth the perfidy thus complained of was public and undeniable, whereas the treacherous machinations of Amer Ben Amru were secret and unknown: thus the greater part of the Yemanies and Cahtanies declared in his favour, their numbers adding considerably to his strength. The facts that were now related by the Ameer Jusuf and Samail Ben Hatim were believed to be wholly false, their assertion being considered the mere defence of convicted assassins, whose purpose had been defeated; all attributing the attempt made upon Amer Ben Amru's life to the ancient enmity of Samail and his people.

His great riches, with the favour he found from Husein Ocaili and other Yemani generals, enabled Amer to assemble a large army, with which he poured down upon Eastern Spain, directing his steps to Saragossa, where his enemies least expected him. No sooner did Samail receive intelligence of the blow menacing his son, than he drew together what forces he could muster, and hastened to intercept the Alabdaries; but the latter, informed of his march, took care to meet him at a point where the asperities of the way made it impossible for his cavalry to act with effect. The troops of Samail were already wearied by long marches, and when at length they had succeeded in disengaging themselves from the rugged paths of the Sierras, among which they were entangled, many of their number were missing, and all were dispirited. Thus by force of dexterity and bravery the Alabdaries prevailed, and Samail Ben Hatim having the worst, was compelled to shut himself up in Saragossa. The Alabdaries then besieged the city with the best hopes of soon reducing it to surrender; but Samail defended the place with great ability, and a valour which was at least equal to that of his enemies. The combats that ensued were frequent, and in

the surprises and sallies made by Samail and the troops commanded by him he inflicted serious injuries on the besieging force.

But as provisions were very scarce in Saragossa, Samail determined to leave the city, confiding the defence thereof to his son, and hoping that with the forces which he was leaving him for that purpose, he would be able to hold it until the auxiliaries, daily expected from Toledo and Cordova, should arrive.

Samail departed from Saragossa accordingly, with a good body of cavalry, and so impetuously did they force their way through the bands of Amer Ben Amru, that the latter could not restrain them, and they made good their retreat: this they effected all the more readily because the Alabdaries, on finding that it was the purpose of Samail to leave the city, did not pursue him to any great distance, they hoping that his departure would enable them to obtain possession of Saragossa without further resistance.

But the city was maintained by the son of Samail with much constancy, and Amer Ben Amru then determined to detach a body of his forces for the purpose of following Ben Hatim: the command of those troops he entrusted to his son Wahib, and to the general of the Cahitanies, Husein Ben Adegiam El Ocaili, who was the cousin of Samail, but Amer remained himself to continue the siege of Saragossa.

The resources of that city were meanwhile diminishing hourly, and when the siege had been prolonged until the defenders were themselves reduced to extremity, they determined to abandon the place to the enemy. Having arranged the necessary preparations with the utmost secresy, they chose the moment when the camp-fires of the besiegers were extinguished; and availing themselves of the darkness of the night, they sallied forth. The march commenced in the third watch of the night, when all were sleeping in the city as well as the camp. Proceeding in the deepest silence until they arrived at the fosses which surround the approaches to the town, they then fell upon the camp with impetuosity, cutting down all that opposed them, and passing the circumvallation without losing a man—a singular piece of good fortune.

When the day appeared, Amru was admitted by the inhabitants, who assured him that they had taken no part in

the resistance or defence, but as they had been compelled by their Wali; whereupon Amer Ben Amru, accepting their excuses, assured them of his protection while they should remain obedient and faithful. The entrance of the Alabdari in Saragossa took place in the year 136. Amer Ben Amru gave the government of the place to his son Wahib, and lost no time in making known the advantage he had gained to his partizans in different parts of Spain. He then departed to aid Husein El Ocaili against Samail Ben Hatim and his son, who had retired to the mountains.

The hopes of Jusuf El Fehri that Samail would succeed in destroying their common enemy, having been rendered vain by the intelligence that his ally had been compelled to abandon Saragossa and all the East of Spain to the Alabdari, the Ameer assembled forces with all speed, and hurried to give him succour. It was at this time that there appeared at Cordova three suns, all very pale,* while in the North of Spain a terrible sickle of fire was seen in the heavens, which were presently afterwards of the colour of blood—prodigies which infused terror into the hearts of all who beheld them—seeing that they were certain signs and presages of the desolation which was to follow, and of the sanguinary wars by which the land was about to be afflicted.

At Toledo the troops of the Ameer Jusuf el Fehri were joined by those which had been assembled by the governors of cities and districts in pursuance of orders to that effect sent to them in letters by their Wali, Samail Ben Hatim. All Spain was now in arms, and the Moslemah generals, whose duty it was to defend the frontiers, factiously directed their forces on the interior of the Peninsula instead, there to take part with opposing factions, and destroy each other in the horrors of civil war. On their side Amer Ben Amru and Husein El Ocaili gathered a considerable army, with a part of which Walid the son of Amer proceeded into the sierras to attack the troops of Andalusia. At the first intelligence of these movements, the inhabitants of the smaller towns fled their dwellings, without knowing whither to go or where to take refuge, seeing that it was the custom of

* Our author thinks it advisable to remark in a note that "this phenomenon of the three suns" is perfectly natural. He adds that three suns were seen at Caspe, in Arragon, on the morning of the 19th of January, in the year 1787.

both sides to burn the villages and hamlets for the purpose of depriving their opponents of the shelter and other advantages to be obtained therein; and the excesses committed on these occasions filled the hearts of the peaceful inhabitants with a dread which was but too well founded. In the sanguinary war of which we now speak, many places were so totally destroyed that their ashes and a few ruined walls were all that remained to show where they had been.

The governors of Spain were thus divided amongst themselves, and the people were kept hovering between hopes and fears; yet from this cruel discord and sanguinary civil war, the union and good counsel of certain among the principal Moslemah evoked the general welfare of all the inhabitants of the Peninsula by the establishment in that country of the empire of the Beni-Omeyas.

During the forty-five years that had elapsed since the conquest of Spain, that province had been governed by its Ameers, or principal generals, of whom, according to our ancient chronicles, there were twenty: and their names I have already related, with the period and duration of the command of each, although as respects that last there are some few differences in the various historians. The time of which I have been hitherto speaking is of forty-four years and seven months; but even as regards the entire period, as well as that portion of it belonging to each governor, there is some slight disagreement among my authorities.

The series commences with Taric Ben Zeyad El Sadfi, who held the command in Spain during one year only. He was followed by Muza Ben Noseir El Becri, who, with his son Abdelaziz, held command for nearly three years, after which the country remained without an Ameer for almost two years, when the troops made their general or leader, Ayûb Ben Habib El Lahmi, Ameer of Spain. He was the son of Muza Ben Noseir's sister, and ruled six months. Alham Ben Abderahman El Kafeki then became Ameer, and governed Spain nineteen months; he was followed by Alsama Ben Malec El Chulani, who was appointed by order of Caliph Omar Ben Abdelaziz, and governed two years and seven months. Ambisa Ben Sohim El Kelebi came next, holding command four years and nearly five months; when he was succeeded by Yahye Ben Salema, who ruled Spain during one year and about six months. Then succeeded the govern-

ment of Hodeifa Ben Alhaûs, and he ruled about six months,* being followed by Otman Ben Abi Neza El Chemi, who held command one year and about six months. Alhaitam Ben Obeid El Kenani was then appointed, and ruled about four months; after him came Abderahman Ben Abdellah El Gafeki, who governed two years and, about seven months. The next Ameer was Ocba Ben Alhegag El Seluli, and his rule endured through five years and two months, when Abdelmelic Ben Cotan El Fehri having risen up against Ocba, deposed him,† and held the government one year and about a month. Baleg Ben Baxir El Caisi came next, and commanded six months; after which Thaalaba Ben Salema El Ameli took the government, which he held about five months. The next Ameer was Abulchatar Husum Ben Dhirar El Kelebi, who commanded two years and eight months; after which the government fell to Thueba Ben Salema El Hezami, who was Ameer one year and some months, at the same time with another ruler,‡ who commanded nine years and eleven months.§ Some men say that there was yet another,‖ but I do not of a certainty know anything beyond the history and succession of these twenty, which I can safely affirm—God knows all things. There is no glory nor power save in God alone,—the All-merciful—the All-glorious.

Series of the Caliphs of the East who were lords of Spain at this period:—

Walid Ben Abdelmelic Ben Meruan.
Suleiman Ben Abdelmelic.
Omar Ben Abdelaziz.
Jezid Ben Abdelmelic.
Hixem Ben Abdelmelic.

* Or as Edòbi says, nearly one year, and some other writers agree with him.—*Condé.*

† Here there is a manifest contradiction, which our readers will not find it difficult to rectify if they recur to the first account of these rulers given by our author, which is the authentic history of the facts, and where it will be seen that Abdelmelic was the attached friend and not the opponent of Ocba.—Tr.

‡ This was Jusuf Ben Abderahman el Fehri.—*Condé.*

§ Or, according to Hayan and Abu Becre, nine years and nine months.—*Idem.*

‖ This may have been Samail Ben Hatim.—*Idem.*

Walid Ben Jezid.
Jezid Ben Walid.
Ibrahim Ben Walid.
Meruan Ben Muhamad Ben Meruan.

Ameers or governors of Spain for the Caliphs of Damascus from the commencement of the Conquest to the 137th year of the Hegira, which was the seventh of the government of Jusuf El Fehri:—

Taric Ben Zeyad El Sadfi.
Musa Ben Noseir El Becri.
Abdelaziz Ben Musa.
Ayûb Ben Habib El Lahmi.
Alhaûr Ben Abderahman El Tzakefi.
Alsama Ben Malic El Chulani.
Ambisa Ben Sohim El Kelebi.
Hodeira Ben Abdala El Fehri.
Yahye Ben Salema.
Hodeifa Ben Alhaûs.
Otman Ben Abi Neza El Chemi.
Alhaitam Ben Obeid El Kenani.
Muhamad Ben Abdala.
Abderahman Ben Abadalah El Gafeki.
Abdelmalic Ben Cotan El Fehri.
Ocba Ben Alhegâg El Seluli.
Abdelmelic Ben Cotan (the second time).
Baleg Ben Baxir El Kaisi.
Thaalaba Ben Salema El Ameli.
Husâm Ben Dhirar El Kelebi.
Thueba Ben Salema El Hezami.
Jusuf Ben Abderahman El Fehri.

The principal Christian chiefs of Spain and France who are mentioned at this period:—

Ruderic, Gothic King of Spain.
Tadmir, Lord of Mercia.
Atanaildo, successor of Tadmir.
Eudon, Duke of Acquitaine.
Charles Martel, Mayor of the Palace.

PART II.

CHAP. I.—Of the wanderings of Abderahman ben Moavia among the Alarabes* of the desert.

Blessed be God the Lord! In His hands are all the empires of the earth. Kingdoms, power, and greatness are given according to His will; Strength, sovereignty, and empire are taken away at His pleasure. O Lord Allah! Thy Empire alone is eternal and without change; Thou alone art Master over all.

On the tablets reserved for the eternal decrees it was written that all the desire of the Beni-Alabas, and all their zeal for the destruction of the Beni-Omeyas, should be proved in vain. Despite of their utmost efforts to destroy and uproot the family which they had despoiled of the Caliphate, and driven from the sovereignty of the Mosleman Empire, a fruitful branch of that illustrious trunk had nevertheless been preserved, and, fixed in the West, was there to take new root and flourish.

Abderahman Ben Moavia, Ben Hixem, Ben Abdelmelic, Ben Meruan, a youth of twenty years, since he had been born in the camp before Damascus in the year 113, was fortunately absent from the city when the order of the Caliph Asefah for putting him to death arrived. He was at that time living with his cousin, Suleiman Ben Hixem, Ben Abdelmelic, secure and honoured, at the court of the Caliph. Instantly informed of his cousin's death, and of the fury with which the enemies of his house were seeking his own

* It will be remarked that our author, learned as he was in the Eastern tongues, does not scruple to permit the article to remain affixed to the noun even when the word in question is preceded by the article of his own language, and writes indifferently the Koran and the Alcoran, the Arabians and the Alarabians, with other instances which need not further be insisted on; these the translator invariably leaves as the accomplished author has been pleased to write them, without presuming to make any change.—Tr.

head, the young prince could not hope to remain undiscovered in Syria, although carefully disguised; wherefore, being provided with horses and a few jewels by his most faithful friends, he fled from the land by retired and secret ways. Thus did Abderahman depart from his country, abandoning the palaces of his fathers and the honours of his ancestral house. He dared not enter a town, for he was no obscure and unknown fugitive, but a son of the powerful sovereigns who had been masters of all around him.

From the year 132 Abderahman led a wandering and precarious life, passing his time among Bedouins and shepherds. He had been accustomed to the feasts of opulence and the delights of luxurious cities only; but, accommodating himself with facility to the hard and rustic fare of the wilds, he endured hardships of all kinds as one who had never known any other life than that of the desert. Every day brought him new cares and alarms; rarely was the sleep of his night taken in security, and when the dawn appeared, Abderahman was himself the first to put the bridle on his horse.

Expecting to find a more secure asylum in Africa than in Egypt, he left his Bedouin hosts and passed into the first-named country. The governor of the province of Barca, Aben Habib, owed his appointment and all his fortunes to the Caliphs of Abderahman's house, and the fugitive hoped to find a shelter at his hands; but Aben Habib was trimming his sails to the wind then blowing, and had forgotten his former protectors. This Wali even sent spies to all the passes of his district, commanding them to make especial search for a youth of such appearance as he described; and hearing that such an one had entered the province at some point which he had not thought of guarding, he gave advice thereof to all his Alcaides, assuring them that they could perform no service more agreeable to the Caliph than the arrest of that prince.

Abderahman was meanwhile proceeding through Barca, where he found well-intentioned and beneficent persons ready to offer him shelter and aid in all parts. His age, the grace of his person, and a certain majesty which could not be concealed, with the affable kindness that shone from his eyes, gained the hearts and secured the service of all with whom he held intercourse. But one night the Bedouins of the Aduar, or village of tents, wherein Abderahman had

taken refuge, were surprised by the arrival of a body of cavalry belonging to Aben Habib, who inquired if they had seen a youth, whom they described in such terms that the men of the desert at once perceived them to be seeking their guest Giafar Almanzor, for such was the name he bore among them. Persuaded that they did not desire to find him for his good, the Bedouins replied that they had seen him, and that he was even then living in their tents, but had accompanied other youths to the chase of a lion, which was to take place in a valley that they named, adding that he would not return to the Aduar until the following night. Having received these directions, the emissaries of Aben Habib departed, and the honourable Bedouins, full of cares for their guest, made known to him the inquiries that had been made, with the suspicions and fears they entertained. With tears and sincere expressions of gratitude Abderahman acknowledged the service they had rendered him; accompanied by six of the most determined youths of the Aduar, he then left the tents, and fled under protection of the night to seek in more remote deserts some asylum from the treacherous enmity of Aben Habib. Wide plains and hills of sand were crossed by these bold sons of the desert, the fierce roar of the lions being heard by them without fear; and after a laborious march of some days they reached Tahart:* there they found a secure shelter for their endangered guest, and one where he was received with generous sympathy. A noble Xeque of the Zeneta tribe, and one of the most distinguished of that tribe, offered his house to the fugitive, who was there received by every inhabitant of Tahart, all offering their best services: nor did Abderahman here conceal his name or misfortunes, knowing the high nobility and generosity of the Zeneta tribe, from which his mother Raha had descended. His rank being divulged, all the Xeques of the Zenetas came to assure him of their devotion; and the good dispositions they already felt towards him were soon strengthened and increased by his graceful and cordial manner.

* Tahart was the principal place of Algarve Media, in Mauritania; it was distant four days' march from Telencen, which we call Trencecn, and was not then a city, although it ultimately became such by the assemblage therein of the population belonging to numerous dependencies. —*Condé.*

The civil war was meanwhile continuing to rage in Spain; the Moslemen in the eastern part of that country maintaining the cause of the Alabdaries, who were led by Amer Ben Amru El Coraixi, while those of Andalusia and the territories of Toledo took part with the Ameer Jusuf El Fehri. The contending armies fought with varying fortunes at the sources of the Tagus and among the wild Sierras, the difficult positions of which were favourable to the Alabdaries, who had but little cavalry, whereas the chief strength of Jusuf El Fehri consisted in that force. In the year 136, and a part of the following year, the general Wahib, son of the Alabdari chief Amer Ben Amru, distinguished himself by the performance of numerous exploits in this mountain war. The fury and enmity of the combatants were equal on both sides, and every province was thrown into disorder by their violence. Towns were burnt, the cultivated fields were cut up, and all the fruits of the earth were destroyed; the people were without rule or justice, and their dwellings offered no security to him who hoped for shelter beneath their roof. Overwhelmed with exactions, and crushed by arbitrary violence from either side, the hapless inhabitants were compelled to follow one or other of the factions, as the fortune of war prevailed, while in their hearts they were equally detesting both.

CHAP. II.—OF THE COUNCIL HELD BY THE XEQUES OF SYRIA AND EGYPT ESTABLISHED IN SPAIN.

IN this time of calamity some few among the good Moslemah still remaining of those who had entered Spain with the army of Coltum Ben Ayadh El Maanic in the year 113, beholding with grief the interminable evils of civil war which were now involving the whole land in flames, the intensity of which continually increased, determined to hold an assembly at Cordova, and there, deposing all thought of their personal interest, as well as all fear of consequences, to try if some remedy could not be found for so grievous a state of things. Among these noble Moslemah, of whom there were some eighty, all men of integrity and prudence, were Husuin Ben Melic of Damascus, Hosain Ben Adagim El Ocaili, Hayut

Ben El Molemis Hadrami of Hemesa, Temam Ben Alcama Abu Galib, and Wahib Ben Zahir, all leaders and generals of the Syrian people established in Spain. Conferring without hatred or enmity towards either of the two parties, and with the care and discretion demanded by the momentous nature of their task, these wise men thought only of establishing in Spain a just and independent government, which might assure the peace and quietude of the people, the good and constant administration of justice, the observance of the laws, the punishment of evil doers, the reward of the good, and a tranquil and permanent succession of the constituted authorities.

Hayut of Hemesa began by remarking that they all knew by what revolts and disorders all Syria and the East were shaken, with the usurpation by the Alabas of that sovereignty which had been held so long by the line of Omeya. He reminded his hearers of the tyranny exercised by the governors of provinces from the furthermost east of Chowarezmia and Mawaralnahar to the western confines of Egypt and Africa, all tending to the perpetual disquietude of the Mosleman empire. He added that their experience had now fully taught them the difficulty of good government when the rulers are so distant from the people to be ruled as are those of the East from the land of Spain. "Too far removed are we from the sources of justice to profit as we should do by its influences," he remarked in conclusion; "and even when a Caliph, just and upright as Abu Becre, or as Omar himself, is seated on the throne of the East, we have had but too many opportunities for observing that the good they desire for us is too slow of arrival, while the great and various evils resulting from the distance between us and them are perpetual and ever present. The help we need is ever most difficult to obtain when most required; wherefore let us now act for ourselves, and above all let us not await the peace and quiet for which the land is groaning, until the triumph of one or other among the factions now contending may leave them leisure to prevent us from obtaining it."

To this Temam Ben Alcama replied that the reasonings they had heard were but as the echoes of their previous thoughts, and that all were persuaded of their justice. Many others declared their conviction that Spain, if inde-

pendent of Asia and Africa, well united, and ruled by a good prince, would be the most fortunate country of the world: "but where," they asked, "where are we to seek the prince we so much need?"

To this none gave reply, and for a time all remained in silent thought. Then spake Wahib Ben Zahir, and said, "Do not marvel if I propose to you a young descendant of our ancient Caliphs, and one of the same race with our Anabi Mohamad. Now wandering in Africa among barbarous tribes, though persecuted and a fugitive, he is yet respected and served by those right-thinking people for the true worth of his nature and the nobleness of his condition: I speak to you of Abderahman, son of Moavia, who was the son of Caliph Hixem Ben Abdelmelic."

All present listened with respect to these words, and the proposal received unanimous approbation. Temam Ben Alcama and Wahib Ben Zahir were appointed to proceed into Africa, and, in the name of the Spanish Xeques assembled to consult for the good of all, require from Abderahman that he should accompany them into Spain, there to be Ameer and governor of the land.

The messengers thus chosen were commissioned to offer the young prince assurance of the fidelity and obedience of all there assembled; they were directed to explain to Abderahman that they desired him to reign among them in perfect independence of the Eastern Caliphs, and of their lieutenants or Walies, whether of Egypt or Africa. They were furthermore commanded to add that all good Moslemah would be ready to give their lives for the assurance of his independent sovereignty, and for the stability of that empire which they then offered him.

CHAP. III.—Of the embassy of the xeques to abderahmán.

The noble Moslemah charged with this embassy departed with much secresy for Africa, assigning such causes for their journey as were calculated to prevent Jusuf El Fehri from taking alarm. Arrived at Tahart, they were well received by the Xeques of the tribe of Zeneta, and being presented to Abderahman they declared the cause of their coming, when Temam Ben Alcama said to him, "The Moslemah of Spain,

and in their name the principal Xeques of tribes belonging to Arabia, Syria, and Egypt, have sent us to offer thee not only a secure asylum, for that thou hast already obtained in the protection of these noble Zenetes, but the empire and sovereignty of Spain. And this they do from their own minds and of their free will. Already art thou master of many hearts, and in our loyal obedience thou shalt find a support firm as the mountains. Perils and stubborn resistance thou wilt have to encounter, but thou shalt not be alone; at thy side thou wilt find the steadfast conquerors of the West, Generals well practised in the field; while the people who desire and who call thee to govern the land that belonged to thy fathers, shall be faithful to the death, and shall combat, if need be, first to place and then to maintain thee in the sovereignty which they offer."

Abderahman remained some time in silence, and as if hoping that Temam would continue his discourse; but when he perceived that all were awaiting his reply, he made answer and said, "Illustrious Generals, Envoys of the Moslemah of Spain,—In compliance with your wishes, and in the hope of doing you good, I will go with you, ready to fight for your cause, and if God give me aid and preserve to me the allegiance you offer, in me you shall find a true brother, and the faithful sharer alike of your perils or prosperity. Labour and adversity do not intimidate me, nor do the horrors of battle and death inspire me with fear; for though possessing but few years, the inconstancy of my fortunes has rendered me familiar with many forms of death, and taught me to count my life but as precarious and insecure. Since you tell me, then, that such is the desire of the honourable Moslemah of Spain, I am content to be their general and defender, if such be also the will of God."

The Envoys were highly satisfied with that reply. They then remarked to the prince how much the success of their undertaking depended on the secresy to be maintained; but he replied that he must in any case confide the matter to his benefactors the Zenete Xeques; nor could he be prevailed upon to depart without having done so, declaring that in this there could be no danger whatever. The Envoys then said that they would leave the decision of that question to his own discretion, when, calling the Xeques without delay,

he communicated to them the affair upon which those Cavaliers had come to treat, with the grave proposals which they had made to him.

Then the Xeque, who was principal of that tribe to which Abderahman was himself allied, made answer with much promptitude: "My son, since God hath called thee to this work, do not hesitate to commence it bravely, and rely on us to aid thee with such force as we may; for of a truth none can maintain the honour of his house and family if it be not with the lance and the strength of horsemen."

All the Xeques then present congratulated Abderahman, and assured him of their services. The Zenete Xeques offered him a body of 500 horse, those of Mecnasa 200. The Xeque of Tahart gave a company of 50 horse for himself alone, with 100 lances or men-at-arms.

After a few days only, given to the needful preparations, Abderahman departed with the envoys, the principal Xeque giving him his benediction with tears. All the youth of the tribes would fain have accompanied his march, and all desired to serve him. His separation from the family of the Xeque of Zeneta was not made without sighs and regret, as might have happened in the parting of long-tried friends, seeing that the cordial qualities of the young fugitive had strongly disposed all hearts towards him.

CHAP. IV.—Of the end of the war against the Alabdari.

About this time the Ameer Jusuf El Fehri had defeated the son of Amer Ben Amru, and pursued him even to Saragossa, where he kept him closely besieged, together with his father El Abdari. Jusuf pressed the town with extraordinary rigour; and although the Alabdari made certain sallies against the besiegers, they produced but little effect. The troops of the two generals, added to the numerous population of the city, soon made an end of the provisions stored therein, while the besiegers maintained their guard with increased diligence, suffering no supplies to enter the gates. The sallies of the Alabdaries were meanwhile daily assuming a more desperate character, and some of the partizans of Amer Ben Amru, wearied of the privations they were en-

during, began to make secret proposals to Jusuf El Fehri. The end of these negociations was that Saragossa was surrendered to him and his generals at the close of the moon Dilhagia, in the year 137. Jusuf then placed Amer Ben Amru El Alabdari in chains, with his son Wahib Ben Amer, and his secretary Alhebab El Zohari. Having then put the affairs of the city into some order, and made arrangements for its future government, the Ameer departed for Toledo, taking his three captives with him, they being still in their chains, and fastened upon the backs of camels.

When Jusuf El Fehri had entered the territory of Toledo he dismissed that part of his force which had been collected from the Comarcas of that province, and repaired to the city itself, accompanied by his principal generals only. He remained there but a few days, and then proceeded towards Cordova.

The Ameer was one day reposing with his train in a valley called Wadaramla at about fifty miles from Toledo, and his people were making ready the noon-day meal; the prisoners also were taking their food under a careful guard. Suddenly the friend of Jusuf El Fehri, Samail Ben Hatim, entered his pavilion in great haste, and much fatigued, as a man who had ridden fast and far. Presenting a letter to the Ameer, he said,—"Read this, and thou wilt see what is the importance of my visit: it has been sent me by one in whom I have all confidence." Jusuf read, and as he concluded, Samail resumed: "Thine empire is at an end, my Lord," he said, "for he who shall debase thine estate and destroy thine authority is even now on the way. God hath destined us to death as it was suffered by Suleiman Aben Xiheb, with many other noble Moslemah. Wherefore, do not thou delay to make an end with the Alabdaries, Amer and his son, and fail not to punish those perfidious Xeques who have sought for thee a successor whose presence shall be presently made manifest. Let them perish at once with all those whom we have in our bands and who are well known, although they are but as the least of thine enemies."

Jusuf and Samail were still conferring on the contents of this letter, when there arrived a messenger from Cordova, who also came in great haste, and, by the intelligence which he brought, had already thrown the people of Jusuf into much doubt and confusion. This last messenger, who was sent by

order of Abderahman, the son of Jusuf, presented his letters to the Ameer, and he therein read that a Coraixi of the sons of Caliph Hixem Ben Abdelmelic, a young prince called Abderahman Ben Moavia, was then passing the Sea on his way to Spain. According to certain advices which had been received, he was to land on the coast near Elvira, and had been invited to the country by a large and powerful party of the Omeyas, to whom had joined themselves the most noble Xeques of the tribes of Arabia, Syria, and Egypt; these being reinforced by auxiliaries from Barbary.

Having read that missive also, Jusuf remained for some moments as in dismay; and after a certain time so spent, he rose trembling with rage, and writhing like a trampled snake: then, listening only to the fury that possessed him, he commanded that his three captives, Amer Ben Amru, his son Wahib, and the secretary Alhebâb El Zohari, should be hewn to pieces; which was done on the instant. But that cruelty may well have disposed fortune to take part against Jusuf El Fehri, and would appear to have done so, since from that moment she abandoned him, and passed over to the banners of his fortunate rival, who was then happily crossing the sea. The death of Amer El Alabdari took place in the commencement of the year 138.

On the following day the Ameer Jusuf met a cavalier who came from Cordova charged with letters from his mother, who informed him that Abu Otman, one of her most faithful servants, had sent her intelligence from Caria-Toras, where he had his dwelling, to the effect that one of the sons of Caliph Hixem, named Abderahman Ben Moavia, was crossing the sea, and was expected to land on that part of the coast called the Sea of Damascus, in the confines of Elvira, namely: he added that there was a great movement and expectation of the people in those parts, all affirming that the legitimate ruler and master of all the states of the West was on the point of arriving to take possession of his dominions. This letter completed the confusion of Jusuf and his friend Samail Ben Hatim: they hastened their march, and sent letters in all directions with commands for the instant assemblage of troops, to the end that they might not be taken unprepared, being firmly resolved to oppose themselves earnestly to the meditated changes.

CHAP. V.—Of the arrival of abderahman in spain.

On the 10th day of the moon of the first Rebie, and in the year of the Hegira 138*, Abderahman Ben Moavia landed in Hisn Almunecâb,† being accompanied by about 1000 Cavaliers of the Zeneta tribes. The principal Xeques of Andalusia were there awaiting his arrival, and as he set his foot on the shore they uttered the oath of obedience to his rule, each taking the hand of the prince as he did so; while the people, who had assembled in great numbers, shouted for joy when the young sovereign appeared, and cried aloud, "May God exalt Abderahman Ben Moavia, King of Spain!"

The fame of these things passed through all the South, and in a few days the most important and respectable men from all the tribes of the Moslemah in Spain had assembled to give the Prince welcome. The younger among them were more particularly zealous in his favour, and all declared themselves his faithful subjects, many demanding permission at once to enter his service.

Abderahman was himself at that time in the very flower of his youth; his deportment was graceful, his aspect noble and beautiful, his complexion of clear white and red, fairly mingled; the eyes were large and fine, of a bright blue, and highly animated,—his countenance was at once friendly and majestic; he was of good stature, and his form was slight; at a word, the beauty and grace of his person increased the satisfaction generally expressed at the arrival of Abderahman: the applause of the people was universal—their contentment was manifested in emulous desires to enter the service of their Prince; and a few days only had elapsed when the Xeques who followed the king were joined by more than 20,000 men from the Comarcas or territories of Elvira, Almeria, Malaga, Xeres, Arcos, and Sidonia. When he arrived before Seville, the whole city

* A.D. 755.

† The Fortress of Almunecâb, or of the Hills: we now call the place Almuñecar.—*Condé.*

came forth to receive him, and he was proclaimed with universal rejoicings, while commissioners sent by other cities advanced to assure him of their ready service and faithful obedience.

All these things were known to Jusuf el Fehri, and all awoke his indignation, while they filled him with despair. He was amazed at the light inconstancy of the popular will, and still more at the perfidy—for so he called it—of the Xeques of the Arab tribes and those of Syria: nor could he control his displeasure at what he considered the treason of the Egyptian generals and that of the cities on the coast, from which he had not expected the disloyalty wherewith he now saw himself deserted. He commanded his son Abderahman to prepare for the defence of the city and Comarcas of Cordova, while he himself, in company with Samail Ben Hatim, assembled the people of Toledo, Merida, and other Capitanias or military districts. At the same time Jusuf despatched his two sons, Mahomad and Alcasim, to Valencia and Tadmir, there to assemble the people and maintain his party in those regions.

CHAP. VI.—Of the war against Jusuf el Fehri and Samail ben Hatim.

The King Abderahman Ben Moavia was well convinced that it was most needful for his credit with his new people that he should give some proof of bravery and address in the conduct of war; he also perceived that he had to do with two experienced and very valiant generals, who would lose no moment in the attempt to destroy the as yet insecure edifice of his rising empire. He therefore took counsel with the Xeques of the Zenete tribes and those of Andalusia, when it was determined that they should at once proceed to Cordova, which was then held by the son of Jusuf El Fehri. Nor did the latter refuse the encounter; he came forth with a large body of cavalry, and a sanguinary combat with the vanguard of Abderahman having ensued, the battle soon afterwards became general. But the troops of El Fehri could not resist the impetuosity of the African horse, and flying in disorder, they took shelter within the city.

Abderahman Ben Moavia then sat down before the walls, determined to maintain the siege until the city should surrender. Proclamations were at the same time sent forth to the people, wherein all were informed that the King Abderahman, being a son of the Caliphs of the Beni-Omeyas, was in truth their legitimate sovereign, and had come to deliver the land from the calamities brought upon it by tyrannical and arbitrary governors, commencing with the power of the Ameer Jusuf El Fehri, now unjustly retained. They were furthermore assured that if, following the example of other cities, they would surrender themselves to his obedience, and desist from aiding the Ameer who pretended to maintain himself in a sovereignty which he now held without the right to do so, they would find themselves in a short time enjoying the inestimable blessings of peace, and might live tranquil and happy under the paternal government of their legitimate Prince.

The news of this the first victory gained by Abderahman brought a weight of sorrow and bitterness to the spirit of Jusuf El Fehri. He at once took counsel with Samail Ben Hatim, and they determined to march with all diligence on Cordova, there to succour the son of Jusuf, and compel the King Adaghel or the Intruder—for so did they call Abderahman—to raise the siege. Having thereupon assembled a large force from the east and centre of Spain, they commenced their march towards Andalusia.

Informed of this movement, of the assemblage of troops and of the design of their leaders, Abderahman then took a part of his forces, and leaving 10,000 men to continue the siege of Cordova, the conduct of which he confided to the General Temam Ben Alcama, the young king departed to meet his enemies. He had himself but 10,000 cavalry, and his resolution to advance with this body in the face of a great host, composed of foot and horse, was not without an appearance of presumption, more especially as the Generals commanding the superior numbers were Captains of so eminent a name in battle. Nor did his advanced guard fail to advise him very soon of the enemy's approach, when Abderahman made a somewhat hazardous recognizance, and several skirmishes ensued between his Zenetes and the troops of El Fehri: but these enabled him to ascertain the cha-

racter of the ground and the amount of force composing the first division of the advancing army, which was commanded by Jusuf himself.

Now Abderahman had drawn fortunate and encouraging presages from the circumstances which concurred on that occasion: the day was that of the Arafa of the Victims, and could not but be favourable to him; wherefore, without considering the uncertainty of the event, he exclaimed with confidence,—"It is the day of Id al Adheha or the Festival, and cannot fail to be a day of Juma against El Fehri, and one of evil augury for Jusuf and his people. Albricias!* my friends, for I bring you good news,—we shall have a day that may deserve to be called brother to that when the battle of Merg-Rahita was gained."

And God fulfilled the prophecy of Abderahman. The prince, his generals, and all under their command, knew how to make the best of the time and place, while the confidence and bright hopes of their sovereign communicated a cheering influence to the hearts of his people.

The camp of Jusuf El Fehri was at Musara; and Razi relates that Jusuf, remarking on the small number of the troops brought with him by Abderahman, repeated to his generals certain ancient verses composed by Hurca, the daughter of Noaman, which are to the following effect:—

Here come we, a thirsting band;
But soon we shall exhaust our store;
Since we have only to divide
That wretched spoonful,† and no more.

When the two hosts had come well in sight of each other, Abu Ben Gebir el Ocaisi passed to the second division of

* Albricias! make me a present! a gift for good news! These are the best equivalents for that joyous Spanish "Albricias,"—a word for which our mother tongue has none to render the precise meaning.—Tr.

† Este mezquino cucharro—"this mean spoonful." Condé tells us that the natural cavities and hollows in the stones, wherein the rain water is sometimes found gathered, are called by the shepherds and fellahs "Cucharros." Our author adds the following words: "as the Arabs of the Deserts affix so high a value to every deposit of water which they find, so their poesy does not disdain these rustic images;" but in a case such as that before us the question is not one of sublime images, and the rusticity of the one used requires no apology.—Tr.

Jusuf's forces, which was commanded by Samail Ben Hatim, to whom he said: "O Abu Jayx! let us have confidence in God! But, by heaven, this will be such a day as was that of Merg-Rahita. All around us is of evil augury. God and the destinies are against us. By the might of Allah! would that I were deceived! but dost thou not see who are the warriors and who the generals?—Omeya, Fehri, Cais, and Yemen! Our general is Fehri; his vizier or lieutenant is Zofaro Ben Alhariz; while thou thyself, who art this day vizier, art Cais! The day is Juma—the day of victims. Such was the day of Merg-Rahita; and did not the sons of Alhariz then die? Thus, all appears to me to be against us. Yet may God grant that it be not so ordered in His eternal decrees!"

When these words were heard by Samail Ben Hatim, he replied: "Let us advance to the battle, and prove ourselves brave warriors nevertheless." This happened a little before daybreak; and at the dawn, the cavalry of the first division attacked the Zenetes and those of Xeres with a furious impetuosity; but they were received by Abderahman and his force with equal valour. The infantry of Jusuf was ridden down by his own cavalry; and before noon-day El Fehri saw his troops in full flight, all rushing in confusion from the field, which they left covered with the corpses of their fellow soldiers, their arms and spoils. The two generals, Jusuf and Samail, accompanied the fugitives each by a different road; and so ended the battle of Musara, which was fought on the day "Id al adheha," or Feast of the Victims, in the year of the Hegira 138.

CHAP. VII.—Of the subjection and surrender of Cordova.

At the battle of Musara, Abderahman covered himself with glory; and all the Xeques of his party conceived the best hopes of their young monarch, from the firmness of his conduct even more than from the valour of which he gave proof. The partizans of Jusuf, on the contrary, were dismayed and full of terror in their hearts; but they took pains to invent imaginary triumphs, which, as they averred, had been obtained by the fugitive generals, and affecting to

rejoice for these pretended victories, as if they had been true ones, they deceived all who were willing to listen to them.

But the account of what had happened could not be prevented from reaching Cordova; and the people, losing heart, ventured to propose to Abderahman Ben Jusuf El Fehri that he should surrender the city on favourable conditions, since it appeared to them but obstinate rashness to attempt defending it against a prince as fortunate as he was valiant,—whom no army resisted, and whom all the cities of Spain acknowledged as their lord. Then the son of Jusuf, seeing the disposition of the citizens, assured them that if no succours should reach him, and if the siege were not raised within a certain time, he would permit them to make for themselves the conditions on which the city should be surrendered. Jusuf meanwhile had retired with the broken remnants of his army to the west of Spain, and Samail to the land of Tadmir,—the troops of the last-named general having dispersed themselves through the territory of Elvira and the Comarcas of Almunecaub.

The king, Abderahman, now returned to the camp before Cordova; and the citizens, not expecting succours to arrive, commenced their negociations for surrender. They desired that the troops of Ben Jusuf might be permitted to depart by the gate of Axarquia, as those of the king made their entry by that of Alcantara: and this was done with great tranquillity. The Alabdaries went forth with those who desired to follow them, of which the number was but small, and all then took the road to Merida. The king, Abderahman, appointed Husam Ben Abdelmelic Governor of Cordova; and having received the oath of allegiance from the people of that city, he left it some few days after, finding it needful to pursue his enemies, who were gathering new forces at Merida.

The example of Cordova did not fail to be followed by other cities; and when they sent their offers of obedience to the king, he received them with much goodness, according especial attention to the Xeques who presented the submission of each place, and promising them to pay a visit to their cities, so soon as he should have tranquillised the provinces, and placed all things in security. At the same time he con-

firmed the Alcaides in their offices, and maintained the Walies of the frontier in their respective commands. Thus, all departed from his presence well content, and spoke very advantageously to the people of their young sovereign, whose pleasing appearance and excellent qualities they could not sufficiently extol, and whom they declared to resemble a beneficent genius rather than a mere man.

But these congratulations and rejoicings of the good Moslemah were troubled by a great misfortune which befel the troops on the frontiers of France. By advice of the Syrian general, Husam Ben Adegiam El Ocaili, the forces were commanded to make an advance for the purpose of restraining the Christians of those mountains, who were making a large assemblage of soldiers, and whose movements threatened to impede the communication maintained with the Moslemah holding the city of Narbonne. Husam entrusted the command of this expedition to his vizier, or lieutenant, Suleiman Ben Xihab; but that leader, being met in the narrow passes of the mountains by a vast body of troops, was defeated,—nay, he suffered a total route at the hands of the Christians, in which the greater part of his people were slaughtered, and he finally died himself, bravely fighting for the cause which his valour could not render successful. This defeat of the Moslemah took place on the second day of the second Rebie in the year 139.

CHAP. VIII.—Of the continuance of the war, and the compact made with Jusuf el Fehri.

Now the partizans of Jusuf El Fehri having made known to him the departure of the king from Cordova, and the subsequent movements of Abderahman, the deposed Ameer, remembering that but few troops were left in the city, gathered 20,000 men, and having divided them into two bodies he departed from Merida with the one half and proceeded to Cordova; having despatched the other by a different road, and commanding it to meet him at the same point. Marching more by night than by day, Jusuf succeeded in surprising the gates; and all that the Wali, Husam Ben Abdelmelic could do, was to escape with the few troops he commanded to Hisn-Modwar, in the Comarca of Granada.

When the king Abderahman was made acquainted with these things, it grieved him to the soul to see himself thus circumvented by the promptitude and sagacity of his enemies; but convinced that such a movement could only have been effected with a small body of men, he did not hesitate to return to Cordova with such people as he had with him, determined not to give Jusuf the time required to fortify himself once more in that city. But he did not find El Fehri there, the first division of that general's troops having been sent in pursuit of the Wali Husam, whom they were commanded to exterminate utterly. Jusuf himself had entered Cordova for no other purpose than that of getting into his hands the Xeques of Abderahman Ben Moavia's party, on whom he proposed to take a signal revenge; yet he did not remain in the city, since finding that none of the principal Xeques were there, he had nothing more to detain him, and hurried forward to join his first division.

Abderahman was no sooner informed in Cordova of the course taken by El Fehri than he followed close on his traces, and came upon him in the Comarcas of Almunecaub, where he found Samail as well as Jusuf, the two generals having there united their forces. Losing no time in delays, and giving his troops only so much repose as was needful for them to take the food distributed to them, Abderahman then arranged his order of battle, and animated his soldiers to the combat. He placed himself at the head of his cavalry with admirable intrepidity and determination, commencing the attack in person, and maintaining it with singular tenacity and perseverance. The generals Jusuf and Samail also fought that day, as they had done in many a one before it, —no otherwise, that is to say, than as men desiring to die with their swords in their hands. Very obstinate and sanguinary was the battle; but towards the hour of Alazar, or the middle of the afternoon, victory declared for the banners of Abderahman, when Jusuf and Samail left the field to their enemies, and fled, the troops that yet accompanied them dispersing in disorder, and themselves taking refuge in the mountains of Elvira.*

Samail Ben Hatim now advised his friend Jusuf El Fehri to seek an accommodation with Abderahman El Adaghel,

* The Alpuxarras.

since the latter was so much favoured by fortune, as they could not but see; and, although much against his will, the deposed Ameer felt compelled to accept that counsel, which was even more abhorrent to his sons than to himself. He proposed conditions of peace accordingly, addressing the king through the medium of Husam El Ocaili, who was the cousin of Samail Ben Hatim, although he had taken part against that general. By his influence and credit with the king, Husam prevailed on Abderahman Ben Moavia to grant an amnesty to Jusuf El Fehri and his followers, with a total oblivion of all past offences; the deposed Ameer on his part engaging to place all the fortresses and cities which he held in the king's hands within a certain time specified, together with all the deposits of arms and munitions of war still remaining in his possession, those belonging to himself alone excepted. These conditions were agreed to and signed on a certain Wednesday, which was the second day of the moon Rebie Postrera, the second in the year 139.

Medina Elvira and the new fortifications constructed in Granada were resigned into the king's hands as a first consequence of this arrangement, and the Walies departed; Muhamad Abulaswad, son of Jusuf, proceeding to the land of Tadmir, and the rest to the Comarca of Toledo: but when they saw that the people of those countries still held for their party, and found their orders yet obeyed and respected by all, they repented of their precipitate agreement. They consequently set themselves at once to the task of inflaming men's minds against the king, and resolved to maintain their own party in life at all hazards, cost what it might.

CHAP. IX.—Of the entrance of Abderahman into Merida, and the birth of his son Hixem.

While the generals were thus occupied, the king Abderahman had proceeded peacefully to visit Medina Merida, where he was received with great demonstrations of joy, his arrival being celebrated by the inhabitants as a day of solemn festival. He traversed that great and important city on horseback amidst the sincere acclamations of the

people, being much pleased with the beauty of the place, and beholding with admiration its magnificent edifices erected in the times of the emperors of Rome. The king remained there some time, and thither came deputies from numerous cities of Lusitania, which is on the West of Spain, to offer him their obedience. Continuing his progress, Abderahman visited the whole territory, and was everywhere received with joy, the people manifesting a sincere pleasure in the sight of a prince so cordial and generous, and who, although still so young, was already renowned for his prudence and sagacity no less than for his victories.

Now at this time the term of the pregnancy of the Sultana Howara had arrived; and when Abderahman, who greatly loved his consort, received intelligence of her indisposition, he hastened to Cordova, where the Sultana was then residing. She was an African of one of the tribes of Barbary. A few days after the king's arrival in Cordova, and on the fourth of the moon Xawal, in the year 139, was born the son of Abderahman, even Hixem; such was the name which the king desired that the child should receive. That auspicious event was celebrated with many rejoicings; the king Abderahman dispensing alms very liberally, and giving food to the poor in great abundance.

In this year Abderahman Ben Moavia commanded to erect the Rusafa; he likewise reconstructed and restored the ancient road* or causeway, and planted a very beautiful garden, wherein he caused a tower to be built, from which the whole was visible, and whence the most admirable views of the distant country were obtained. In this garden the king himself planted a palm-tree, which was at that time a new thing in Spain, that being the first and only one in all the land; and from this it is that all those which we now have in the country have proceeded.

Those who knew the king, relate that Abderahman would often contemplate the growth of this palm from the summit of his tower; and, on a certain occasion, when recollections

* The word "Calzada," which in its usual acceptation implies a road only, is believed here to mean a levée for the confinement of the waters; and the garden here described is supposed to have been planted on land gained from the river by means of this Calzada.—Tr.

of his native land had rendered him thoughtful and melancholy, he is said to have composed those verses of his to the Palm which are now in the mouths of all men.

"Thou, also, fair and graceful Palm-tree, thou
Art here a stranger. Western breezes wave
Softly around thee with the breath of love,
Caressing thy soft beauty; rich the soil
Wherein thy roots are prospering, and thy head
Thou liftest high to Heaven. Thou, fair tree,
Dost feel no grief for thine abandoned home.
To me alone that pain, to me alone
The tears of long regret for thy fair sisters
Blooming by Forat's wave.*

Yet do the River and the Palms forget
Him, the lone mourner, who in this strange land
Still clings to their remembrance, my sweet home!
When the stern Destinies, and sterner they,
The sons of fierce Alabas, drave me forth,
How wound my soul around thee, and how hangs
E'en now my heart on thy beloved soil!

Thou, Palm, thou, fair and lovely, of that home
Dost take no thought! Ah, well is thee! but I,
Sad mourner, cannot choose but grieve; and thus
I weep for thee and me, oh lovely Palm,
Thinking of our lost home."

At this time King Abderahman desired to do honour to the general Samail Ben Hatim, for that he had contributed to the submission of Jusuf el Fehri, and also to give proof of the estimation in which he held Ben Hatim's ability and experience. He wished, moreover, to gain the affection and confidence of that Wali; wherefore, entrusting to his care a mission of great importance, he sent him to the cities of Eastern Spain, there to order everything that might appear to him convenient for good government, especially charging him to compose the differences which had arisen among the generals on the frontiers of Afranc,† and exhorting him to tranquillise the country by every means in his power, thus restoring it to the quietude and good order so needful for the prosperity thereof.

* Euphrates. † France.

Samail departed accordingly, with Ola Ben Gebir El Ocaili, his cousin, to whom was confided the command of certain fortresses on the same frontier.

In the commencement of the year 140, Moavia Ben Salehi, El Hadrami, of Hemesa, returned from a voyage which he had made to Syria, also by command of the king. Moavia was one of those who had followed the fortunes of Abderahman in Egypt and Africa; he had now passed over into Syria for the purpose of persuading the numerous partizans of the Beni-Omeyas who were in that country to remove into Spain, and many among the most important of these did in fact arrive in his company. Among these were Habib Ben Abdelmelic and Abdelmelic Ben Baxar Ben Meruan, with the ten brothers of the Mernanes and Ximro Ben Nomeir, all of whom were valued servants of the Omeyas. Abu Suliman Foteis, Ben Sulciman, Ben Abdelmelic, with some few more who had been wandering, poor and persecuted, through Irak, in Egypt, and in Barca, passing their lives in daily peril at that time for no other cause than that they had formerly been illustrious Chiefs and favoured by the Omeyas, were likewise among those thus sought for and invited by the king Abderahman. Their arrival caused him the utmost joy, and he conferred on Moavia Ben Salehi the office of Cadi of the Cadies, or Chief Justice of the Aljamas* of all Spain. To Abdelmelic Ben Omar Ben Meruan, Abderahman gave the government of Seville, and to Suleiman Foteis Ben Suliman that of Cabra, a city which they then called Wasita, in remembrance of the town of that name in Irak.†

At this time there came certain Cavaliers of Hemesa also; but their intention was to take vengeance on Abdallah, the son of Abdelmelic Ben Meruan, for that he, moved by very light causes, had put one of their kinsmen called Abulsabahi El Yahsebi to death; but Abderahman, being informed of this their enmity, caused them instantly to be invited to his presence, when he succeeded in composing

* Courts of Law.

† It was this grateful recollection of their native cities which induced the Arabs to call the Spanish cities by Eastern names. Thus they called Seville, Hemesa; Elvira, Granada; Damascus and Jaen, Quinsarina, &c. &c.—*Condé.*

the difference between the two families, to the lasting satisfaction of both.

The king now declared it to be his pleasure that Cordova should be the capital of the empire of the Moslemah in Spain, commanding that a palace or alcazar for his own residence, with very beautiful gardens, should be constructed and laid out on the banks of the river.

CHAP. X.—Of the insurrection of Jusuf el Fehri, and the death of that general.

Now about this time the governor of Seville, Abdelmelic Ben Omar Ben Meruan, advised king Abderahman of the military movements and assemblage of soldiers then making by the partizans of Jusuf El Fehri: he added, that this Wali, departing from the compact agreed on, was not only delaying the surrender of the fortresses, but had openly raised his banners in rebellion, and declaring himself the legitimate Ameer of Spain, had given to King Abderahman the title of El Adaghel, or the Intruder, affirming that sovereign to be an unknown adventurer. Thereupon Abderahman commanded Abdelmelic to go forth with the cavalry of Xeres, Arcos, Sidonia, and Seville, for the purpose of chastising those rebels.

The first enterprise of Jusuf was to make himself master of Hisn Modwar,* which he took by surprise at the end of the year 141, when he made incursions over the whole Comarca, exciting tumults in every part. Abdelmelic marched against him without loss of time, commanding his sons to follow with a body of Infantry, for the purpose of laying siege to the fortress of Modwar. There then followed certain skirmishes of cavalry between the forces of Jusuf and those of Abdelmelic, with various fortunes, but the latter having the advantage on the whole, and occupying several towns, the inhabitants of which had declared for Jusuf. These acquisitions were the more important as being for the most part depositories of El Fehri's arms and munitions of war, all which were given up to Abdelmelic

* Now Almodovar.—*Condé.*

by the people, who declared themselves to have served the rebel Wali only because compelled to do so by the presence of his troops; for "the rebel" was what these people now called the once legitimate Ameer, to whom but a short time before they had proffered obedience. Abdelmelic then proceeded with all diligence to the siege of Modwar, which surrendered in a few days. He then wrote to the king with intelligence of that success, and begging Abderahman to send him reinforcements from Cordova; requesting that they might be directed to march in two separate bodies and by different roads; one to the Comarcas of Ubeda, and the other to the territory of Tadmir, where the rebels were in the greatest force both as regarded the number and quality of their troops. He furthermore desired that these succours might be despatched with all possible diligence.

By these dispositions of his force, Abdelmelic succeeded in dividing the strength and attention of Jusuf El Fehri, and on the fields of Loxa he found means to surround the cavalry of that general, which was nevertheless very numerous, and was led by Jusuf himself. That great leader and the larger part of his followers, men well experienced in war, fought with admirable bravery in the battle that ensued: the carnage was very great, few having found it possible to open for themselves even so much as a passage through which they could save their lives on that day. Jusuf El Fehri was himself found on the field covered with wounds, and expired almost immediately after having been recognised. Abdelmelic then sent the news of the victory to Cordova, and with that intelligence went the head of Jusuf El Fehri. The battle of Loxa and the death of Jusuf took place in the year 142. He had governed Spain during nine years and nine months.

CHAP. XI.—OF THE TRIBUTE IMPOSED ON THE PEOPLE OF CASTILLE, AND THE ENTRANCE OF THE TROOPS OF KING ABDERAHMAN INTO THE CITY OF TOLEDO.

ABDERAHMAN rejoiced much in the news of this victory, because he hoped that the death of Jusuf El Fehri would put an end to the rebellious efforts of his partizans. About the same time the king agreed with the Christians of Cas-

tille* as to the amount of tribute which they were to pay, when the letter of protection and security which he accorded to them was conceived in these terms:—"In the name of God, the Clement and Merciful. The magnificent King Abderahman to the Patriarchs, Prelates, Monks, and other Christians of Spain, to the People of Castille, and all who shall come after them, peace and security.

"The King promises by his soul that this pact shall be firmly kept on his part; and on the part of the Christians there must be paid 10,000 ounces of gold and 10,000 pounds of silver for the space of five years, with 10,000 good horses and as many mules, 1000 cuirasses, 1000 swords, and the same number of lances, all to be supplied yearly for the space of five years.

"Written in the City of Cordova, on the 3rd day of the Moon Safir, and in the year 142."

We find it related that this year the Moslemah lost the city of Narbonne, and that they did so in consequence of having confided the guard of the same to Christians.

Now the general Samail Ben Hatim having heard of the death of Jusuf, and becoming convinced of the vanity of human things, or perhaps because he considered the game of fortune to be hopelessly lost for him, wrote letters to the king, remarking that his presence was no longer required in the east of Spain, and begging permission to retire to his house at Sigüenza: but first he had taken care to fulfil the charge entrusted to him respecting the fortresses of that district, yet with more intelligence and ability than affection or good will, and chiefly as one who is unwilling to belie the good opinion formed of him. Abderahman replied by granting the permission required, when Samail repaired to Sigüenza.

At this time the Wali of Toledo, Temam Ben Alcama, was pursuing the sons of Jusuf El Fehri through that Comarca, and the eldest of the brothers, Abderahman Ben Jusuf, who was a brave and good cavalier, died valiantly

* The Granadine writer, who imparts the following document, referring it to Razi, did not, as I think, copy it with exactitude, since the provinces beyond the Sierras of Guadarama were not then called Castille, but Gallicia.—*Condé.*

fighting in a sanguinary skirmish that ensued between his troops and those of Temam. His brother, Muhamad Abulaswad then took refuge with his cavalry in the city of Toledo, where he fortified himself and awaited the result.

Temam sent the king intelligence of this victory, and together with the news he despatched the head of Abderahman Ben Jusuf, which was then placed with that of his father on a hook driven for that purpose into the wall of Cordova. The victory obtained by Temam was celebrated by a festival; the reputation of being a prudent as well as very brave general, already obtained by the unfortunate son of Jusuf, having given it a great importance.

Alcama was meanwhile continuing the siege of Toledo, and as the city was very populous, while the people therein were of divers minds and opinions, that populace having neither interest in nor affection for either of the parties, the inhabitants desired principally to see a term put to the evils of the siege as early as possible. Thus the defence was conducted by the greater part of the citizens with but little good will, and their efforts were neither voluntary nor powerful. Nay, there were certain among them who resolved to facilitate the entrance of Temam, and these men supplied him with the means for effecting a surprise. Thus taken at disadvantage, the partizans of Jusuf thought only of saving their lives by a prompt flight, and there was none among them who regarded the danger of the young Muhamad Abulaswad, the son of their late Ameer. He was consequently made prisoner by the general Bedre, a freedman of the king Abderahman; but another son of Jusuf, Casim, succeeded in saving himself by assuming a disguise. Temam then put Muhamad Ben Jusuf into safe keeping, and sent him to Cordova to be disposed of according to the king's pleasure. The entrance of Abderahman's general into the city of Toledo took place on the ninth day of the moon of Dylcada in the year of the Hegira 142.

When Abderahman Ben Moavia received intelligence of these events, he, being by nature compassionate, and furthermore disposed to benignity by the joy of success, took pity upon the youth of Muhamad Ben Jusuf, and abstaining from shedding his blood, commanded that he should be carefully guarded in a strong tower of the walls of Cordova.

CHAP. XII.—Of the insurrection of Barcerah ben Nooman and Casim the son of Jusuf.

That son of Jusuf who was called Casim, and had fled from Toledo, had meanwhile been received into his house at Gezira Alhadra by the Xeque Barcerah Ben Nooman, El Gasani, who offered him his protection with such rashness of zeal that he even encouraged the young man to gather forces and recommence his resistance to the authority of the sovereign. Idle and licentious bands of men, corrupted by the disorders of the civil war, soon assembled beneath their banners; and with these Barcerah and Casim succeeded in obtaining possession of Sidonia. This advantage raised their hopes, and attracted to their command still greater numbers of those whose strongest motive of action is the hope of spoil. With troops of this character they fell upon Seville, and the city being unguarded, as expecting no attack, they entered it by surprise.

When the king Abderahman received intelligence of these movements, he departed instantly from Cordova with a body of his African horse which was then in the city, and such few cavaliers as could accompany him in haste, giving notice at the same time to the Wali of Toledo, Temam Ben Alcama, that the latter might arrive from Andalusia without loss of time. The king himself meanwhile approached the city of Seville, whence Barcerah came forth with his troops to meet him. An obstinate struggle then ensued; but their leader Barcerah being killed, the people he had commanded fled in disorder, and Abderahman entered Seville, where he was met by the inhabitants with demonstrations of great joy. The African leaders then received orders to follow the flying bands, but were commanded to take the life of no man who would accept quarter and resign his arms.

A few days after this event, the Wali Temam Ben Alcama arrived at Seville, where the king received and entertained him as his own guest with much honour. He desired that Temam should there repose himself for some time in his company; but the Wali excused himself, declaring that he had not been sent for to take rest, but to finish once

for all with the rebels afflicting the country. He then proceeded to Sidonia, which he entered without resistance; Casim and his bands not daring to wait his arrival within the walls: but, knowing that the son of Jusuf had taken refuge at Gezira Alhadra, Temam hurried thither with incredible celerity, when Casim was delivered up to him by his own people. The illustrious general then returned to Seville, taking his prisoner with him, that the king might do with him as it seemed good in his eyes.

Abderahman was greatly rejoiced at the rapid and fortunate result of these expeditions; and to do the greater honour to his Wali, Temam Ben Alcama, he made him Hagib or Mayordomo Mayor,* an officer ever considered as the first minister of the crown, and consulted in all matters of importance at the Court of the Beni-Omeyas, whether relating to peace or war. As to Casim Ben Jusuf, him the king sent under a strong guard to the city of Toledo, whither he charged his vizier and freed-man Bedre to conduct the young man, with command to place him in security within one of the towers.

Abderahman then gave the government of Toledo to Habib Ben Abdelmelic, and that of Merida to Abdallah Ben Abdelmelic Ben Meruan, while the father of Abdallah was appointed to the government of Seville, that he might not be far removed from his son. To Ibrahim Ben Abdelmelic Abderahman entrusted the government of Alicante, to Muhamad Ben Abdisalam Ben Baseil that of Sidonia, and to Ased Ben Abderahman El Xeibani he gave that of Elvira.

The Vizier Bedre meanwhile arrived with his prisoner at Medina Toledo, but had not been there many days when he received command to assure himself of the person of Samail Ben Hatim, then at Siguenza, and take him also bound to Medina Toledo.

CHAP. XIII.—Of the imprisonment and death of Samail Ben Hatim El Caisi.

The illustrious general above named was dwelling at his house of Siguenza, to all appearance in tranquillity, and

* Lord Steward of the Household.

yielding to the force of circumstances, without seeming to think of any other occupation than the quiet converse of such among his old friends as shared with him the conveniences and enjoyments of his abode, and with whom he not unfrequently rejoiced over the calm and leisure of his life. Yet it chanced on a certain day that the seemingly tranquil commander gave a festival of much pomp and profusion to numerous guests, in the midst of which he repeated a verse comprising prophetic intimations of events that were very soon to be realised. It was immediately after this announcement on his part that the vizier Bedre surrounded his house with a company of horsemen, and taking Samail to the city of Toledo, there placed him in a prison, wherein he was shortly afterwards put to death. The cause of this event has never been made clearly manifest; some have attributed it to the fears entertained of his known craft and astuteness of spirit, others to calumnies propagated by his enemies, and suspicions, more or less founded, of a treasonable intention on his part; and that these were not without cause would appear to be highly probable, since after the death of Samail many perfidious conspiracies, which could not have been set on foot by mere adventurers, were discovered to exist, and must quickly have caused infinite disorders in the state had they been permitted to remain undivulged. The death of Samail Ben Hatim took place in the year of the Hegira 142.

Now the king Abderahman being in Seville, was received with great honour by Hayut Ben Molemis El Hadrami of Hemesa, who belonged to one of the noblest of the Syrian tribes, and was the chief Xeque thereof. Entertaining the sovereign very nobly, he finally made him a gift of the dwelling and everything it contained, which Abderahman accepted, that he might not disappoint the old man. Hayut lived but a short time after this event, and the king honoured his memory with very elegant verses, in which he celebrated the hospitality, munificence, and other excellent qualities of his departed friend, saying that when Hayut Ben Molemis had disappeared from the earth, goodness, grace, hospitality, and valour, had departed with him. Abderahman remained at Seville during the greater part of the year 143, and at that time he made the beautiful Almunia or Garden called

that of Rabuñales. There also he caused a fine tower to be constructed, and in like manner as he had done at Cordova he planted a Palm tree, whence all that are now in the Comarcas around Seville have proceeded. That place was ever afterwards called Nahla; and there are some who say that the verses to the palm-tree composed by King Abderahman were made for this one, and not for that of Cordova. God knows how that may be.

CHAP. XIV.—Of the revolt of Ben Adra in Medina Toledo.

The king was then preparing to visit the East of Spain, when he received intelligence to the effect that a very powerful and influential family of Toledo had risen in revolt against his vizier of that city. The rebels were people of Hemesa, and were led by Hixem Ben Adra El Fehri, a relation of Jusuf El Fehri. Abderahman was furthermore informed that these insurgents had taken possession of the Alcazar or palace, the Vizier having escaped death only by flying precipitately from the conspirators and leaving the city in their hands; but many honourable Moslemah who had opposed the attempt of the insurgents, had been mercilessly cut to pieces. The advices concluded by declaring that Casim Ben Jusuf had been released from his imprisonment, and that invitations to join the rebellious bands had been sent into every town of the province.

All the loose and broken bandits wandering through the country then hastened to join themselves to the bands of the rebels; and Hixem Ben Adra, scattering his treasures among them with an unwise profusion, soon gathered a body of 10,000 men, but very many of their number were criminals or vagabonds who had previously not dared to show themselves in the streets of a town, lest the hands of justice should cut short their rambling.

This event caused much sorrow to the king Abderahman, who nevertheless lost no time in mourning over it, but gathering the troops that were in Cordova, which he added to the African cavalry, he gave orders that reinforcements should be despatched from Merida and its Comarcas to his aid, and should be directed on Medina Toledo, for which

city he at once departed. When the cavalry of Cordova reached the neighbourhood of Toledo, all the rebel bands, then busily ravaging the fields of Calatrava and Guadalaxara made haste to take refuge in the city; since, not being regular soldiers nor accustomed to the exercises of honourable warfare, they did not dare appear before the troops of the king or fight on a fair field, although they could do something in the keeping of the city gates, and when sheltered behind the ramparts of its walls or within the high towers thereof: the position of Medina Toledo is moreover exceedingly elevated and very strong, while the city is furthermore surrounded by thick walls well supplied with massive towers the defence of the place was, therefore, not a difficult one.

Seeing these things, and that the siege was likely to prove a long one, not only on account of the strength of the city, but also because of the desperation of the rebels, who fought as men without hope, the king consented to open negociations with the chiefs commanding there, although sorely against his will. But the inhabitants of Toledo were cruelly oppressed by the bands within their walls, and Abderahman was besides advised to that step by his Hagib, Temam Ben Alcama, who had received intelligence to the effect that a no less perilous tempest was threatening from the coasts of the Algarve or west of Spain; whence it was of the utmost importance that the siege should be brought to a close, in order that the hands of the king might be left at liberty for the new troubles demanding his attention.

The Hagib thereupon, he being also Wali of Toledo, declared to the rebels that if within three days they would surrender themselves to the mercy of the king, he could assure them of a favourable reception, with forgiveness of their irreverence and perfidy; when Hixem Ben Adra, entreated by his family and by the larger part of the inhabitants, to whom the privations of the siege, and still more the disorders of the rebel bands, were insufferable, despatched his son Muhamad to supplicate the pardon of the king, which Abderahman granted on condition that Hixem should at once throw open the gates of the city and repair himself to the royal camp. With no little fear and distrust Hixem presented himself at the pavilion of the king accordingly, but was prevailed on to do so only by the instances of his

son and others among the principal citizens, who, offering to accompany him thither, at length overcame his reluctance and fears. On that same day it was that the city was surrendered, Hixem Ben Adra departing thence, as the gates were thrown open, and proceeding with his companions to the presence of their offended sovereign.

Abderahman received them with a very serious countenance, but after a few moments spent in silence, he told them that although, for their rebellion and the evils they had caused, they were all deserving of the heaviest punishments, yet they should be freely forgiven for that time, and might return to their homes in security. He desired only that Casim Ben Jusuf should be replaced in his prison, and that the son of Hixem Ben Adra should be left with him as a hostage. Some of the generals and leaders surrounding the King recommended him to command that by way of precaution the head of Hixem should be struck off, with those of other chiefs of Hemesa who were his most zealous partizans; but Abderahman declared that he would not forfeit his word to obtain the whole world, and repeated his orders for their safety. He then appointed the General Said Ben Almesib to be Vizier of Toledo, and departed himself for Cordova, dismissing the people of Merida, who had come to the siege of Toledo, and commanding all to return to their provinces. The return of the King to Cordova took place at the end of the year 144.

CHAP. XV.—Of the arrival of the Wali of Cairvan to dispute the authority of Abderahman.

The King had not well reposed himself from the fatigues of his expedition against Toledo, when his Hagib, Temam Ben Alcama, brought him certain letters which had been sent by the Xeque of Medina Tahart, the capital of the Zeneta Tribes; and in these he was advised of the preparations making by Ali Ben Mogueith, Wali of Cairvan, for a descent which he meditated on the coasts of Spain, with intention to re-establish in that country the authority of Abu Giafar Almanzor, Caliph of the East: there was furthermore an

addition, to the effect that all the Walis of Egypt and Africa were charged to assist in expelling the fugitive, Abderahman Ben Moavia, from the land of Spain. These advices it was that had caused the Habib to counsel his lord, as he had done in respect to negociation with the rebels of Toledo.

Shortly afterwards, the Wali of Merida sent notice that a considerable force of foot and horse had disembarked on the Coast of the Algarve or West of Spain, and had spread themselves over the country, proclaiming the Caliph of the East, and declaring the King Abderahman Ben Moavia an illegitimate usurper. These advices did not fail to cause the young monarch heavy care, but principally because he foresaw that the people of the districts attacked must needs be subjected to great suffering by this invasion. He commanded that his generals should at once assemble their troops from the surrounding Comarcas, and should proceed with all speed to the west.

No sooner had the news of a hostile demonstration on the Coast reached Toledo, than the unquiet spirits in that city began to labour for the rekindling of a rebellion, the fires of which had been scarcely well extinguished. Hixem Ben Adra El Fehri and his adherents again seized the Alcazar, slaying all who opposed them, and among others the Wali of Toledo, Said Ben Almesib. They next took possession of the gates and fortifications, proclaiming the Caliph of the East to be the Sovereign of Spain.

And now, as the flight of Fame is never so rapid as when she hath undertaken to publish the calamities of a people and trumpet forth an insurrection, so the changes that were occurring in Toledo were soon made known to all in Cordova. The King then commanded his General Bedre to assemble the troops of Calatrava, Talavera, and other parts, wherewith he was enjoined to lay close siege to that city, taking with him Mohamad the son of Hixem Ben Adra, whose life he received orders to make contingent on the surrender thereof.

Having then gathered the cavalry of Cordova and its Comarcas, the King himself departed by Castala to Silbe and Myrtola, where the forces of Merida were to assemble. The Africans, under the command of the Wali of Cairvan, were meanwhile overrunning the country, even to Beja

and Jabora, exhorting the towns to take arms against Abderahman, whom they called the Intruder, and declared to be the miserable relic of a family which had been proscribed and excommunicated in all the Alminbares or pulpits of every Aljama in the East. Many timid and superstitious men were persuaded by that last reason, and joined themselves to the Wali of Cairvan, who, the more effectually to seduce the ignorant and common people, caused a banner to be borne before him which he declared that he had received from the hands of the Caliph himself, and which offered great rewards and advantages to all the good Moslemah who would march beneath it. There is never any want of those idle and inconstant men, delighting in novelty and eager for change, who are but too ready to resign themselves to the influence of him who promises boldly: and the vain promises of Aly Ben Mogueith were soon found to produce considerable effect, insomuch that with his Africans and this horde of idlers together, he stood at the head of a body which was in appearance a very formidable one.

Abderahman, meanwhile, having assembled the troops of Cordova and Merida, divided them into three corps,—the advanced guard, the centre or main body, and the reserve, the best part of his force being composed of the cavalry of Cordova, Seville, and Xeres. The skirmishing parties of Abderahman's army advanced until they came in view of the camp of Aly Ben Mogueith, whose host was a numerous one, and his troops pouring forth from their lines, some few encounters—but of no great importance—ensued. Hixem Ben Adra himself had arrived at the camp of Aly for the purpose of persuading that leader to make no delay, but proceed at once by forced marches to the capital of Spain, the great city of Toledo, which he, Hixem, was holding at the disposal of that mighty Lord and Sovereign of the Moslemah—whether of the east or west—the Caliph Giafar Almanzor. The arrival of this Xeque, and the assistance which he offered, completely dazzled the Wali of Cairvan, who believed that by the gain of one battle he was about to render himself master of all Spain. He boldly made his dispositions accordingly, and the following day at the hour of dawn the two armies came into presence. The Africans commenced the battle, which was a very sanguinary one,

and continued with equal fortune on both sides till the middle of the day; but early in the afternoon, the Andalusians charged with so much impetuosity that they threw the cavalry of the invading General into confusion: the African infantry, and that mingled horde of disorderly men whom they had encouraged to swell their numbers, then fled precipitately to the Camp, which the mercenaries began to pillage, while the Africans who had been left to guard it attacked them with infinite fury; and thus assaulted on both sides, the loose bands strewed the field in vast numbers."

Aly Ben Mogueith himself died fighting bravely, but the greater part of his people fled in the utmost confusion, all who could gain the coast making their best speed to do so, and to return into Africa; yet full 7,000 of the African troops were left dead on the field of battle. The head of their General, Aly Ben Mogueith, was ultimately severed from his body, the brain was taken out, and the skull filled with camphor: that done, Abderahman sent it with all secrecy and celerity to Cairvan, whither it was borne by a Cordovian of great boldness and address, to whom the King entrusted that office, and who fastened it to a column on the principal market-place of the city during the darkness of night. On the following morning, when the people of Cairvan assembled to their daily occupations, they found the head of their Wali thus exposed, and beneath it was affixed an inscription to the following effect:—

"Thus doth Abderahman Ben Moavia Ben Omeya reward the rash men who presume to intrude on his dominions, as did he who was once Aly Ben Mogueith, Wali of Cairvan."

The victory here described was obtained in the year 146, or, as some say, in the year before, but the date first given is that best authenticated.

The King commanded his troops to pursue the fugitives, but to take the life of no man who laid down his arms: he then returned to Cordova to make preparations for the reduction of Medina Toledo.

CHAP. XVI.—OF THE INSURRECTION OF THE ALCAIDE OF SIDONIA.

HIXEM BEN ADRA and his adherents now found it no easy matter to return to Toledo, which was already closely besieged by the King's Generals; wherefore, after inciting the Alcaides of Sidovia, Jaen, and other towns of Andalusia, to revolt, Hixem had the imprudence to shut himself up in the first mentioned city, confiding in the bravery of its Alcaide, Said Ben Husein, El Yahsebi, who was of the Alabdari faction, and known by the name of Matari. To these rash men there likewise joined themselves the former Alcaide of Sidonia, Sakfan Ben Akma, with Abdallah Ben Harasa El Asedi, who had once held the same office in Jaen,—two men discontented with their lot and eager for change. From the remains of the army defeated at Beja, and from whatever loose marauders they found beneath their bands, these confederates formed bands, with which they destroyed the crops and plundered the open towns without mercy, burning houses, cutting down trees, and committing other barbarous extravagances altogether unknown to regular warfare.

These bandits had the boldness to carry their outrages even to the gates of Seville, one of which they succeeded in surprising, and entered the city. The Wali of Seville, taken at disadvantage and unprepared for defence, had retired as the rebels took possession of the place, but having gathered a few companies of cavalry and a small body of foot soldiers, he returned to attempt their expulsion, not expecting them to flee at his approach, as those lawless bands precipitately did, having first plundered the palace of the King and the magazines of arms. Abderahman, informed of all these disorders, mounted his horse, and giving orders to his Hagib to assemble the cavalry of the province, he departed for the scene of tumult with his Africans and Zenetes alone, but commanded that the Alcaides of Cabra, Ecija, and Carmona, should join him before Seville with the cavalry of those cities.

Then the loose and disorderly hordes flying hastily before the Wali Abdelmelic Ben Omar Ben Meruan, as before said, and rendered more than ever eager to be gone by the re-

ported approach of the King, were overtaken by the General Abdelmelic, who, having routed and dispersed them, pursued the fugitive bands to the gates of Sidonia, wherein they found a refuge. He then made all needful arrangements for the siege of that town, and leaving his officers to invest the place, he departed with a few select troops for Seville, there to receive the King, and excuse himself for the neglect which had permitted the bandits to surprise one of the gates of his city.

Among those of the insurgent party who had fallen in the late battles was the Alcaide of Sidonia, Said Ben Husein El Yahsebi, and he being found dead on the field, his head was taken off, placed on the point of a pike, and exhibited to the rebels who had taken refuge in Sidonia. This was done by the Alcaide of Carmona, who repaired to the siege of that town with his people, as did the Wali of Seville, Abdelmelic Ben Meruan, with the Alcaides of Ecija and Cabra. The successive arrival of these generals and their troops caused great terror to the rebel hordes then taking refuge in Sidonia; they confided but little in the inhabitants, and saw well that the whole weight of the defence would be left to themselves: to the bolder among them it therefore appeared advisable that they should still venture to try the force of their arms in the open field, rather than remain to await a certain death, after having first endured the painful privations and useless labours of a siege. These men persuaded most of their comrades to be of their opinion, although earnestly advised to the contrary by Hixem Ben Adra El Fehri, who for his misfortune was shut up among them. He was now getting old, and no longer felt strength or inclination for the toils of battle, but the miserable man destroyed himself by his own evil counsels: yet even the best advice or the most prudent foresight can avail but little when Fortune turns her back and refuses to be favourable.

The camp of the besiegers was meanwhile guarded with less care than was required by the occasion, seeing that the enemy was so near; but the generals commanding did not expect that a force so ill-provided as they knew that of the besieged to be, would venture on attempting a sally in the face of an army so numerous and powerful as was

their own: yet the rebel leaders had determined on the trial, and proceeding with great secrecy, lest the citizens should discover their purpose, they chose the third watch of the night, and marched out by two opposite gates; then, directing their steps on the same point, they marched onward in deep silence, determined either to die or force the passage, their ultimate hope being to make their way to the hill-country of Ronda, and take refuge in those mountains.

And many of the rebels were fortunate enough to succeed in making good their escape, cutting their way through the camp of the besiegers and flying to the hills;—among these were Sakfan Ben Akma, Hafila, and other leaders of the bandits; but the Xeque Hixem Ben Adra El Fehri fell under his wounded horse, and was brought prisoner into the camp of his enemies, with many other rebels who had been also taken.

At the dawn of day, the inhabitants of Sidonia, discovering what had taken place in the night, came forth with joy to declare their unalterable attachment for their king, when Abdelmelic, the Wali of Seville, immediately dispatched intelligence of these events to Abderahman by the Alcaides of Ecija and Carmona. By the same emissaries he sent the head of the rebel Hixem, which he caused to be taken from his shoulders without delay, because he dreaded lest the inexhaustible goodness of Abderahman should still grant him his life. These things happened in the year 148.

CHAP. XVII.—Of the coming of Meknesa against the king Abderahman Ben Meruan.

Now the rebels Sakfun, El Hafila, Abdallah Ben Harasa, and their followers, who had taken refuge in the mountains of Ronda and the Comarcas of Elvira, not content with the good fortune which had permitted them to escape from so many perils, soon passed over into Africa and solicited aid from the Walies of Almagreb. They addressed themselves, among others, to a young Wali of Meknesa, called Abdelgafir El Meknesi, who boasted of being the descendant of

Fatima, only daughter of the Anabi Mohamad, and wife of Aly the cousin of the Prophet.*

To him there joined themselves numerous adventurers from various parts of Africa, all dazzled by the representations and promises made to them by the rebel hordes from Ronda and Elvira. The latter meanwhile took care to publish wonders concerning the fame and riches of the African Wali, who was soon to arrive from beyond the sea, bringing a large army, and vast treasures to reward and enrich the good and loyal Moslemah who should take up arms against the intruding king,† now unjustly occupying the throne of Spain. These tumults and preparations were soon made known in Cordova, when Abderahman commanded that the people of Elvira should at once be led against the rebels of the Sierras, thus seeking to incite his people to insurrection. He placed a strong garrison in Almunecaub, and gave orders to the effect that the ships on the coast should keep watchful guard on all the ports. The king likewise offered a large reward for the heads of the rebel leaders, and by that measure occasioned them great disquiet, since there were few of them who could venture to confide in each other; in proof of which no long time elapsed before the unfortunate Abdallah Ben Harasa El Asedi was, in fact, assassinated at Medina Jaen by his bandit-soldiery, and his head was presented to the king at Cordova. This happened in the year 149.

About the same time, Ased Ben Abderahman El Xeibani, Wali of the province of Elvira, who was conducting the war against the rebels in the Sierras with varying fortunes, received notice that a body of cavalry and other troops had debarked from Africa on the neighbouring coast. This was the first contingent supplied by the Wali of Meknesi; and having succeeded in joining the bandits taking refuge in the mountains, the latter, emboldened by those reinforcements, then ventured to show themselves in the Plains.

King Abderahman was meanwhile exhorting his Walies to terminate the long siege of Toledo, which had been conducted with much negligence and a somewhat lukewarm spirit, partly because there were various relations existing between the besiegers and those of the city. There were no combats of

* Anabi or Nabi; Prophet. † Rey Adaghel.

any moment delivered between the opposite parties, and the besiegers were not prevented from supplying themselves with provisions by means of their river; nay, the people of the Comarcas not only cultivated their fields undisturbed by the besieging forces, but were even suffered to convey the fruits of the same to the city with but very slight difficulty. It was not until Abderahman despatched Temam Ben Alcama to press the siege that assaults were made on the walls; but on his arrival preparations were at once commenced for scaling them at the part where they were lowest and most easily accessible.

Perceiving at length that the siege was to be maintained in good earnest, those of the city began to dread the rage of the conquerors, and agreed with the partizans of Casim Ben Jusuf El Fehri that he should escape from Toledo by swimming the river at a point in one of the suburbs which they pointed out. That done, and as soon as they knew Casim to be gone, they at once opened the gates, imploring the clemency of the king, and excusing themselves by declaring that they had been compelled to do as they had done by the troops and creatures of El Fehri. They affirmed, moreover, that they had taken no part in the death of the vizier Said Ben Almesib, but that all had been the work of the partizans of Casim and the people of Hemesa. Temam Ben Alcama then promised the citizens that he would recommend them to the clemency of the king; but he took the precaution of disarming them, and thus depriving them of the means for effecting further mischief. The surrender of Medina Toledo took place in the end of the year 148.

CHAP. XVIII.—Of the expedition to Gallicia and the war against El Meknesi and Sekelebi.

In that same year the king Abderahman sent the generals of the frontier—Nadhar and Zaid Ben Aludhah El Ashai—to the mountains of Gallicia, and to the Basque mountains which are on the North of Spain. They repaired to the mountains of Gallicia accordingly, and effectually subdued certain assemblages of Christian rebels, who, confiding in the security afforded them by the inaccessible character of

their country, had refused obedience to the King. These men were for the most part disloyal and faithless fugitives from the various provinces of Spain. The troops returned to Cordova laden with riches of every kind, among which were large numbers of captives and numerous flocks.

It is related of these people of Gallicia, who are all Christians, that they are the bravest of all the land of Afranc, but that they live like savages or wild beasts; they never wash either their persons or their garments, nor do they change the latter until they fall in pieces from their limbs, a mere heap of rags and tatters. They enter each others' houses without asking permission, and live as it were in common.

In that same year the king Abderahman caused the walls of Medina Cordova to be repaired, and constructed a fortress in that city.

Now about this time, the Wali of Elvira, Ased Ben Abderahman El Xeibani, having gone forth with his people to chastise the rebels and bandits by whose disorders the coasts of Almunecaub and Almeria were kept in tumult, and who grievously infested those Comarcas, was indeed victorious in his demonstrations against those hordes, and put them to flight; but he was himself very seriously wounded with a lance, and being compelled to retire to Elvira, there died of the injuries he had received. This event, which took place in the commencement of the year 150, caused much grief to the king, by whom Ased Ben Abderahman was greatly esteemed for his valour and prudence. It was by this Wali that the works of the new fortresses in Granada were directed, and the king now appointed the Syrian, Abdelsalem Ben Ibrahim, in his place—an able and experienced man, who was much devoted to the service of Abderahman Ben Moavia, as were likewise his two sons.

The rebels of the Sierras had meanwhile succeeded in effecting a second debarkation of troops on the coast, that band consisting principally of people from Africa sent to reinforce the army of Abdelgafir El Meknesi; and this arrival of auxiliaries so far encouraged the bandits infesting the hill-country that they once more extended their incursions into the Plains, their light cavalry pressing forward even to the Comarcas of Arcos and Osuna. Advised of these incursions,

the Wali of Seville, with no other force than that of his own city and of Carmona, went forth to restrain the insurgents; but the few skirmishes fought between his people and those of the mountains were not of great importance. He then wrote to the king, requesting a reinforcement of cavalry from the Comarcas of Cordova, with which he hoped to repress the boldness of the rebels. The Alcaides of Ecija and Baena were consequently commanded to join him with their people, and, united with those of Seville and Carmona, they continued the war against Abdelgafir and his bands, but with various fortune, much time being spent in numerous yet unimportant skirmishes, the Africans choosing their opportunities with considerable skill, and avoiding all occasions of a pitched battle with great dexterity: they also wearied and harassed their opponents by perpetual surprises. These attacks were for the most part made in the night, as if their object had been to keep the king's forces in continual disquietude, without permitting them to take a moment of undisturbed repose; but when sought the assailants took refuge in their hills, whence they descended only when least expected. Thus the Andalusian cavalry could not profit by the advantages which they possessed over the rebels, and that important part of the royal army was rendered almost useless.

In the commencement of the year 151, ten large barks filled with troops approached Tortosa, where their commanders found means to land those forces. They were led by the general Abdallah Ben Habib El Sekelebi, and had been induced to assemble for the reinforcement of the rebel army by false accounts of victories never obtained, and progress that had not been made, all which greatly tempted the Walies of Africa, who were eager to share in those feigned triumphs. No sooner had their troops reached the coast than they declared that large succours of arms and people were instantly to follow, adding that the son of Moavia would be quickly expelled from the kingdom he had usurped. The Alcaides holding command in the Comarcas of Tortosa gave the Wali of that city advice of these events without delay, when he conveyed the intelligence to the governors of Tarragona and Barcelona. Thence the fame of that debarkation soon passed through all Spain, the number, and above all the quality, of the troops composing it being much exaggerated.

When the King Abderahman received notice of the African arrivals he set forth in person to the land of Tadmir and Valencia, having no other force than his Zenete cavalry, with the troops of such generals as were then at Cordova, but commanding that a large body of men should be assembled to meet him on the way; which was done accordingly. But before the king reached Valencia there came messengers from the Wali of Tortosa, informing him that the people of that Comarca, with those of Tarragona, had defeated the Africans and put them to flight with but little difficulty. He added that the fugitives had not succeeded in re-embarking their scattered remains, seeing that the ships of Tarragona had burnt or driven off those of the African auxiliaries, who had been thus compelled to take refuge in the hills, whither his Alcaides were then pursuing them.[1]

The king was highly gratified by this intelligence; but, although his presence was no longer necessary, he determined to continue his journey for the purpose of paying visits to those cities which had served him so well on that occasion. He repaired to Barcelona accordingly, and offered his acknowledgments in person to the Wali Abdallah Ben Salema, whose promptitude and energy had been the chief cause of the successes obtained; Abderahman also expressed his satisfaction at the condition in which he found the ships on that coast, and exhorted the Wali to maintain them in the same efficient state, the importance of their services in guarding the coast having just been made manifest by what had been done by the people of Tarragona. Abderahman then returned by the cities of Huesca and Saragossa: he was every where received with demonstrations of much gladness, and the attachment of his people to the person of their king was made clearly obvious. After a few days given to those cities, he passed on to Toledo, where he also remained a short time; he then returned by Calatrava to Cordova, and the day of his entrance into his Capital was kept as a festival, being in truth one of sincere rejoicing to the whole people.

But it was now perceived that the debarkation of El Sekelebi had been represented to the rebels in the hills as a great advantage gained by their party; and the bands of El Meknesi, emboldened thereby, resolved to try their fortune

with less reserve than they had previously done. They gave battle to the men of Seville at Astaba accordingly, and even succeeded in disordering and putting to flight the Alcaides of Baena and Carmona, an advantage of which they did not fail to make much boast. The discontented lovers of change were much excited by the accounts sent forth respecting the victories thus gained by the rebels, and being furthermore aroused by certain unquiet and seditious spirits still remaining in Medina Seville, they put themselves into communication with the troops of Abdelgafir El Meknesi. The chief among these traitors was a Xeque called Hayun Ben Salem, and through him they offered to put the city into the hands of El Meknesi, whenever he should appear before it.

CHAP. XIX.—Of the entry into seville of meknesi, and the death of that leader.

Abdelgafir El Meknesi then assembled all who would follow his banners, and descended from the Sierras of Rondo and Antequera with all the force he could make. All being united, he made such dispositions as he thought advisable, and commanded his generals to hold themselves ready for an attack on the troops from Cordova and Seville, which he proposed to commence at the first appearance of dawn on the following day.

Now the command of the advanced guard of Seville had been entrusted by Abdelmelic Ben Meruan, Wali of that city, to his son Casim; but he, who was quite in his first youth and unaccustomed to the horrors of war, having received this charge from his father, and proceeding to observe the position of the enemy, permitted himself to be surprised by a strong body of their skirmishers, and turning his horse without reflection, rode precipitately back to the camp of his father. Enraged at the sight of his son thus returning, Abdelmelic exclaimed, "Die, coward! thou art no true Meruan, and no son of mine:" saying which, he transfixed the unhappy youth with his lance, and Casim fell dead to the ground. All around looked with horror on that deed, but the father bade them remove the body from his

sight, and as they did so, his scouts brought him intelligence that the enemy was approaching in order of battle.

Abdelmelic disposed his people to receive the coming foe, and the two hosts were soon in presence. A few unimportant skirmishes commenced the day, but before the sun had attained to any great height the battle had become general, and was a very sanguinary one, well maintained by both parties. The efforts of Abdelmelic at length prevailed, and he succeeded in breaking the enemy's lines, routing them completely as evening approached, and dispersing their fugitive bands in all directions before nightfall. The greater part of the rebel cavalry took the direction of Moror and Marchena, their infantry that of Leit and the hills of those regions; but the labours and fatigues of the conflict had rendered the troops of Abdelmelic incapable of pursuing the retreating foe.

On the following day, the people of El Meknesi, expecting to be overtaken by Abdelmelic, and dreading his approach, resolved to retire from further combat, when those who could reach Seville made haste to gain that city, but the wounded and most of the foot-soldiers sought refuge in the mountains. Abdelgafir El Meknesi took his way to Seville, confiding in the promise made to him by Hayun Ben Salem, that the gates should be opened to him on his appearance. Nor did Abdelmelic fail to divine the African leaders' intention, and giving his troops but short time for repose, he pursued Abdelgafir, whom he overtook at Alxarafe, which is in the immediate vicinity of Seville. Here an obstinate combat ensued, in which both armies fought with equal bravery and obstinacy; Abdelmelic himself being severely wounded, as were many of his principal officers.

The seditious inhabitants of the city meanwhile took possession of the Alcazar, and killed the Vizier, with a large number of his people. The general Aben Abda Gehwara was also gravely wounded and left for dead: the conspirators then obtained possession of the gates, which they made haste to open to Meknesi, facilitating the entrance of that general into the city by every means in their power, and supplying him with the means for crossing the river.

But the troops of Abdelgafir held the place for one night only; the cavalry of Seville and Cordova followed them into

the city,—the slaughter of the combatants, the cries of those who continued fighting, and the fury of the strife, being interrupted only by the darkness of night, which at length rendered it impossible to distinguish friend from foe.

Abdelgafir El Meknesi soon perceived that it would not be possible for him to maintain himself in Seville: he plundered the magazines of arms during the night, as he did the palace of the King and that of the Wali, and having loaded himself with all the riches he could find in the city, he departed before daybreak, followed not only by his own people, but by all the rebels who had gathered in Seville, those partizans of the African general being, nevertheless, but poorly satisfied with the result of their rash and wicked perfidy. Despite the fatigue of his horses, Abdelgafir accelerated his march, and arrived, without having been pursued, at Castala.*

The king Abderahman was greatly dissatisfied with the long continuance of this partizan war, which, although not of great importance, yet fatigued and exhausted the people employed therein, and was beside a pretext and refuge for all the unquiet spirits of the time, as well as for all the bandits and all the malefactors of the realm. He therefore wrote to the Wali of Merida, commanding him to send his cavalry to Cordova, expressing his intention to carry on the war against El Meknesi with greater energy, and declaring that he would not lay the weapons from his hands until he had brought the rebels to reason, and made an end of the disturbances they were creating. The Wali of Merida thereupon assembled his Alcaides, and departed with these forces to accompany the king.

Meanwhile the intelligence that El Meknesi had entered Seville arrived in Cordova; and Fame, which is ever mendacious, affirmed the troops of that city, with those of Cordova, to have been routed and broken: the forces of the king were moreover declared to be in disorderly flight.

But Abderahman was acquainted with the true state of Seville; he knew that the Wali Abdelmelic was severely wounded, and although without any other force than his Africans, he was desirous of pursuing the rebels in person,

* Now Cazalla.—*Condé.*

since his Wali was incapacitated from doing so; but the Hagib Teman Bem Amer Ben Alcama persuaded him to await the arrival of the troops from Merida, which would not, as he assured his sovereign, be long delayed. Many of that monarch's principal counsellors were indeed of opinion that the king ought not to appear in person in this war of bandits and criminals; but Abderahman longed to know that his people were at peace, and the days seemed to him years while that first wish of his heart remained unaccomplished.

The forces of Merida having arrived at Cordova, the Wali and his Alcaides were received with much honour by the king, and having given the people three days for repose, Abderahman prepared to march against El Meknesi. The latter, informed of what was passing, and knowing that the cavalry of Merida had joined that of Cordova, saw clearly that a tempest was about to fall on his head, and marched once more to seek the well-known refuge of the mountains beyond the river of Cordova. Others of the insurgent generals considered it better to take shelter in the nearer hills; but the opinion of Abdelgafir prevailed, and his troops proceeded to cross the Guadalquivir near Lora.

Now Abderahman had left Cordova on the same day which the rebels had chosen for crossing the water: the latter, making the most of their time, pressed onward with their best speed; but the king, informed of their movements, sent his cavalry forward, with command to attack them wherever they should be found. The Alcaides of Elvira and of the land of Tadmir being also made aware of the purpose of El Meknesi to cross the river, had sallied forth from Seville, and held themselves prepared to cut off his retreat to the mountains. And the fortune of Abderahman's arms did so fully prevail, that both of these bodies came upon Abdelgafir almost in the same hour at the river Xenil and in the vicinity of Ecija; when, thus assailed on both sides, the African leader could no longer maintain his ground, and was compelled to make a retrograde movement. He gave clear proof of valour and skill in the defence and retreat, wherein his troops also comported themselves most bravely; but, overmatched by the conquerors, they were compelled to give the reins to their horses, and fly with the best speed they might. The Alcaide of Elvira, directing

his attention especially to the pursuit of Meknesi, who was very severely wounded, did not fail soon to overtake him, when he drove his lance through the flying General, who fell from his horse: the Alcaide then had his head taken off, and sent it to Abderahman. The same fate befel Aben Harasa and the Xeque Hayun Ben Salem, with fifty more of the African cavaliers, whose heads were presented to the king by the generals of Merida and Carmona. These trophies of his victory Abderahman then commanded to be sent to different cities, as a warning to those who might be disposed to follow the example of their owners: the heads of the fifty African cavaliers, for example, were despatched to Elvira, the garrison-town of Almunecaub and Granada, while those of El Meknesi and Aben Harasa were sent to Cordova, and that of the Xeque Hayun to Seville. The king likewise gave orders for the instant pursuit of the flying remains of that army which had been commanded by El Meknesi, but charged his generals to receive all who should surrender to mercy, and to make it widely known that Abderahman offered a free pardon to such as would promise future obedience. The defeat and death of Meknesi took place in the year of the Hegira 156.*

All these things disposed and set in order, the king next proceeded to Seville, there to visit and console his Wali Abdelmelic Ben Omar Ben Meruan, who lay there grievously sick, being in a sorrowful condition not only on account of his wounds, but also because he was still more heavily burthened in soul for the death of his son, even Casim, whom he had slain with his own hand, as related above; but the presence of the King brought him much consolation, and was as balsam to his sufferings both of body and mind.

Abderahman then repaired to Cordova, taking with him the troops of Merida and the Alcaides commanding the Comarcas of Cordova. Arrived in his capital, the king distributed superb arms, rich vestments, and beautiful horses, to those who had distinguished themselves in the expedition against El Meknesi, now brought to so fortunate a termination. He appointed Abu Omeya Abdelgafir Ben Abi Abda Gehwara to the government of Seville, in which he

* A.D. 772.

was to act as the Vizier of the Wali Abdelmelic Ben Omar Meruan, whom the king had named Governor of Saragossa and of all eastern Spain, desiring the latter to depart for his province so soon as he should be effectually cured of his wounds. This Abu Omeya, thus appointed the vizier of Abdelmelic,* was the youngest son of the vizier Hasan Melic Gehwara: he had been brought up with the King Abderahman, and possessed the entire confidence of his master.

Now Abderahman considered that the Walies of Africa, acting under the orders of the Caliphs of the East, would never cease to disquiet him in his new possessions; he therefore commanded his Hagib, Temam Ben Amer Ben Alcama, to repair to the cities of Tortosa and Tarragona, there to give orders for the construction of a navy sufficiently powerful to form an effectual guard for the coasts of Spain. The same orders were given for Seville, where the king caused building yards to be constructed near Santa Maria of Oksonoba, and in Carthagena he had the Alhalfe or Espartaria, which was the ancient Port of Murcia, put into a serviceable condition: he furthermore commanded that similar precautions should be taken in respect of Tortosa, Tarragona, Almeria, Almunecaub, Algesira-Alhadra, Cadiz, and Huelba. The office of High Admiral (Ameer of the Sea) Abderahman conferred on Temam Ben Amer Ben Alcama, with whose knowledge and energy he was well acquainted, and of whose valuable qualities of various kinds he had had long experience during the many years that the son of Amer had been governor of Huesca, of eastern Spain, and of Toledo.

* It is of this Abdelmelic, the son of Omar, whom the Christians of his time call Omaris Filius, that the chronicles of the period succeeding make "King Marsilius of Saragossa," so frequently mentioned in the history and romances of Charlemagne.—*Condé.*

CHAP. XX.—OF THE INSURRECTION OF HUSEIN EL ABDARI IN SARAGOSSA, AND OF THE EDUCATION OF THE SONS OF ABDERAHMAN.

Now in this year of 156, Husein El Abdari, who had been Wali of Saragossa, but had retired from office, becoming weary of living in tranquillity, and discontented with his lot, began to utter seditious discourses, by means of which he persuaded many ignorant people that they ought not to pay the tenth of their fruits and flocks to the king, since Abderahman employed the amount in making war upon the Moslemah, and in maintaining his own pretensions against the Caliphs of the East, who were in fact the true lords of Spain. But the Vizier of Saragossa secretly sent advice of these things to the Walies of Huesca and Tudela, whom he requested to assemble their people and come upon the city: he warned them, nevertheless, to choose men in whom they could trust for that service, and to advance with the utmost secrecy, since he could not confide in the inhabitants of the place, among whom the intending rebel had much influence. He sent messengers to the same effect, and with like charge of secrecy, to the Alcaides of other parts of the province; and all having arrived at the time appointed by the Vizier, Husein El Abdari was taken and beheaded. Notice of what had happened was then sent to the king, who approved the measures taken, and thanked his Walies* for their zeal and good service.

At this time the young prince Hixem, son of Abderahman, began to make himself remarked for his good under-

* The titles of Ameer or Wali, of Vizier, and of Alcaldo, are sometimes used with but little discrimination in the pages of many of our authorities, but are always clearly distinguished by the more accurate writers. The Ameer or Wali was the supreme Governor of a province, the first of those titles being not unfrequently used by the Caliphs themselves. The Governors of important cities were also called Walies; those of smaller towns were designated Alcaldo. The Viziers were Lieutenant-governors of the Walies and the Deputies of the Alcaldes,—the latter rarely having more than one, the former frequently two, or sometimes even more, in proportion to the extent of his rule. These Vice-governors acted as supreme in the absence of their principals; the first, or, as he is called in later times, the Grand Vizier, taking the chief part in cases where more than one held office.—TR.

standing and many excellent qualities, he was the delight of his father for his amiable disposition and virtuous inclinations; and the king had chosen masters for him from among the most learned men of the time. Abderahman was above all anxious that his sons should be early accustomed to the practice of justice and equity: he therefore commanded that Hixem and his brother Suleiman should be frequently present during the sittings of the Cadies in the Aljama, as well as at those of the Mexuar or Council of State. These princes were in the habit of celebrating the birthday of their father with much rejoicing; and on those occasions they gave very sumptuous entertainments to the learned men who were their ordinary guests, and to such as formed part of the academies or assemblies of the learned which were held on all those occasions. The princes then conferred rewards on those who produced the best eulogies on their father, they themselves preparing verses and elegant encomiums, which the preceptors caused to be read in these learned assemblies or academies.

In the year 158, Moavia Ben Salehi, the Cadi Mayor of all the Aljamas of Spain, died at Cordova. Born in the village of Naquila, near Hemesa, this Moavia had early distinguished himself by his learning and ability; he was much beloved by the king Abderahman, whom he had long faithfully followed in all his fortunes, adverse as well as prosperous. His funeral rites were solemnized in the presence of the whole city, and Abderahman himself made the oration or funeral-prayer. The king then appointed Hasan Ben Besar El Hudeili, an excellent as well as very learned man, to be Cadi of the Cadies, in the place of Moavia, and named Sirag Ben Abdallah Ben Sirag, his freed-man, and one in whom he much confided, to be President of the Chief Tribunal of Cordova.

Now from the time when the Christians in Afranc (which is France) had made themselves masters of the city and Comarcas of Narbonne, they had not failed to profit by the continual wars in which king Abderahman had been involved by his rebels, and taking courage from their impunity, these infidels now entered Spain with a considerable force, cutting up the fields, destroying the crops, burning the towns, and carrying the inhabitants away captive. Their cavalry even

ventured to penetrate so far as Saragossa; but the Walies of Huesca, Lerida, and other frontier towns, repulsed and drove them beyond the mountains, where they had to leave their prey, as they turned their backs.* And well it was for the Walies of the frontier that they had been thus successful, seeing that their own negligence had caused all the calamities suffered from the Christians at that period. This incursion† made by the people of Afranc took place in the year 162.‡

When the Walies of Huesca and Saragossa despatched intelligence to the king of what had been done, Abderahman commanded them to pursue the Christians to their mountains, and even to keep them in obedience by frequent inroads upon their valleys. But this warfare was long, obstinate, and without any result of importance, while it soon became exceedingly irksome to the Moslemah of the frontiers, on whom was laid the dangerous task of following amidst their wild and almost impassable mountains a race of valiant and determined men, clothed only in bear-skins, and having nothing whereof their foes could make booty but the clubs and scythes with which they defended themselves.

Abderahman now gave his best attention to the good government of the country: he sent his eldest son Suleiman, who had been born to him in Syria, to the city of Toledo, of which he appointed the young man governor, thinking that by holding the charge of a province so important he might have fair opportunity for putting in practice those wise and prudent doctrines which he had been taught by his preceptors: but for the security of his government, and to confirm him in all good principles, the king gave him a Vizier and Counsellor on whom he could himself fully rely: this was Muza Ben Hodeira, a statesman of much ability and experience. His second son, Abdallah, King Abderahman

* "To leave their prey as they turned their backs," our author informs us is an Arabian proverb, used whenever an absolute loss is incurred, of whatever kind it may be.

† The affair of which such slight mention is here made by the Arabic writers is that so famous in Christian chronicle and romance,—the Battle of Roncesvalles.—Tr.

‡ A.D. 778.

appointed to the government of Merida, with the same purpose, and to him he gave Abdelgafir Ben Hasan Ben Melic, son of the Vizier Hasan Gehwara, as Vizier and Counsellor. Abdelgafir had been brought up with the king from his childhood, and Abderahman loved him as a brother. With these ministers it was that the king sent his sons to acquire that knowledge of the duties of governors which was proper to their princely condition.

Relieved from the cares by which the early part of his reign was oppressed, King Abderahman was now wont to take recreation of various kinds, and among others that of falconry, having a large number of very valuable falcons for that purpose. Of his love for that sport we find the following anecdote related:—In one of his warlike expeditions the king was marching with his army, when a flight or flock of cranes* passed over the heads of the troops, and was seen to alight in a valley at no great distance. Calling for his falconers, Abderahman immediately abandoned the host and departed for his favourite chase, which gave occasion to the wits of his court for the production of many spirited and elegant verses; and the king, as well for this his love of falconry as for his mountain wars, was called the Sacre Coraixi.

In the year of the Hegira 154, and in the moon of Dylhagin, the appearance of the sun at its rising was so extraordinary that its aspect excited the utmost terror: the light thereof had no splendour, and in that frightful obscurity it continued until near the middle of the day, although there was neither eclipse, mist, nor dust.

CHAP. XXI.—OF THE FLIGHT OF THE SON OF JUSUF FROM HIS PRISON IN CORDOVA.

MUHAMAD ABULASWAD, son of Jusuf El Fehri, had been taken prisoner, as related, and confined in a tower at Cor-

* Dame Juliana Berners has instructed us so carefully as to the terms to be employed in those worshipful matters, that no excuse remains to him who uses them inaccurately, as the Translator fears to be here doing, not having the learned lady's work at hand for immediate reference.

dova, where he had been rigorously guarded during the earlier years of his captivity. But as all things yield to time, so did the severity of Muhamad's keepers and gaolers. At the end of some years, compassionating the sadness of their prisoner's lot, they thought there could be no danger in permitting him to enjoy the light and warmth of the sun. For at that time the crafty Mohamad pretended that he was nearly blind; and so well did he assume the appearance of the condition he feigned, that all believed in the supposed infirmity, surnaming him Muhamad the Purblind in consequence.

A long time passed in this manner, and the guards of the captive Mohamad, confiding in the security his helpless state afforded, allowed him to leave his prison and wander about the lower halls of the tower, more especially in the hot months of the year. Nay, they even permitted him to pass the night in those rooms, to the end that he might enjoy the coolness of the place, and did not refuse him leave to descend to the cisterns when it pleased him to fetch water. The pretended blind man was thus enabled to discover that opportunity of evasion which he continually sought, and he soon perceived that the lower windows which gave light to the cisterns would afford him an easy method of escape.

At this time Muhamad was occasionally visited by men who were the secret partizans of his family, and to them he communicated his hopes and purposes; when they encouraged him to carry his plans into execution, offering all the aid that they could procure him from without, and assuring him that thus assisted he could not fail of success.

One evening of the summer, therefore, when all were bathing in the Guadalquiver, and even the servants of the prison had absented themselves, leaving Mohamad, whose supposed blindness was their security, in the lower halls where he was now accustomed to pass his days, the son of Jusuf resolved to avail himself of the favourable opportunity of thus opening the gates of his prison: making his exit by the lower windows of the cisterns, he swam across the river, and gaining the opposite shore, where his landing was concealed by a grove of poplars, he there found clothing and a horse, which had been provided for his use by the friends alluded to above. Riding all night and the following day by

unfrequented roads, he arrived without having been recognised at Toledo, where he was received into the house of other friends, who, having supplied him with the disguises needful, proceeded with him by night and in all secrecy to the mountains of Jaen, where they found him a refuge among the bandits and rebels taking shelter in those wilds.

Alarmed for the consequences of their neglect, and dreading punishment, the guards of Muhamad kept his flight long secret; but at length it became necessary that the truth should be declared, and intelligence that the blind Muhamad had escaped from his prison was despatched to the king. Abderahman was much grieved on receiving the news, and displeased by the negligence of the guards. "All these things," he said, "are the work of Eternal Wisdom; and this event may serve to teach us that you cannot confer a benefit on the wicked without doing an injury to the good: much I fear lest the flight of this blind man should cause us many a disquietude and much effusion of blood."

The king then sent advice of what had happened to the governors and Alcaides of Elvira, Segovia, and Jaen, commanding the latter to make search in the mountains of that district, and giving orders that all should keep careful watch on the movements of the rebels still taking refuge therein.

At this time the Wali of Toledo, Habib Ben Abdelmelic El Meruan, departed from life. He was one of the most valued friends of the king, who, with his six sons, accompanied the body to its last home. On this occasion Abderahman perceived that his son Hixem was giving himself up to immoderate grief, and could not be prevailed on to rise and follow the corpse to its grave, when he addressed him in the following words:—"This is not well, Abulwalid! so much suffering and depression is not to be indulged; rise at once, and accompany the best of thy house to the tomb."

CHAP. XXII.—OF THE WAR AGAINST MUHAMAD ABULASWAD, THE SON OF JUSUF EL FEHRI, HIS ADVENTURES AND DEATH.

No long time was suffered to elapse before the fires of rebellion began to give evidence of their existence in the Sierras of Cazorla and Segovia. The bands still in revolt, joined by the seditious and discontented of all the provinces, chose Muhamad Elaswad or Abulaswad for their leader, and once more unfolded the banners of El Fehri; at sight of which, more than six thousand men, well armed and experienced in war, prepared themselves to march beneath their folds.

The king was soon informed of these things, and without losing a moment of the time so precious on occasions of the kind, he departed for the scene of strife with the cavalry of Cordova, giving notice to the Walies of Tadmir and Jaen, whom he commanded to advance with their people for the purpose of dispersing that horde of rebels.

Hearing of the preparations making to receive them, and aware that Abderahman himself was in the field, the insurgents endeavoured to avoid an encounter, and the rather as they daily hoped to increase their host by the forces which Casim Ben Jusuf was gathering in the mountains of Ronda, and which Hafila, with others attached to his party, were also labouring to assemble in Somonton and the Sierras of Jaen. And in this they so far succeeded that, although beaten in various battles of no great importance, it was not found possible to bring them into the open field, nor to engage them in a general action. Much time was thus expended in that mountain war, which, though more than once brought to a seeming close, was evermore resumed at every convenient opportunity.

Meanwhile the rebels did not suffer so much as did the cavalry and people of Abderahman, who was accompanied by the horsemen of Elvira, Lorca, and Jaen; since the difficulty of the mountains, within which the insurgents ever withdrew for shelter, was so great, that even the infantry of the king could not pursue them into their ravines and defiles without much loss and suffering.

Wearied by the vexations of that slow and fatiguing warfare, Abderahman commanded his Walies to pass from one end

to the other of those hills, and compel the rebels to abandon their holds: he caused all to be well supplied with aid from experienced companies of cross-bow men, and ordered that the forces should enter the mountains by various points at the same time: this was done by the Walies accordingly. The rebels then fled through the hills of Castulona or Castalana, and taking refuge in the city so called, Mohamad Abulaswad was there advised by certain among the inhabitants to recommend himself to the mercy of the king, assuring him that if he would ask pardon, and make an excuse for his flight, Abderahman was of so clement a nature as to be incapable of refusing forgiveness. To this Abulaswad replied, that for his misfortune he was not at liberty to entreat the king's pardon, even though he should determine to do so, being compelled to follow whithersoever the people he seemed to command should think proper to lead him. He added that he knew well to what end the disastrous war was tending, but that he could do nothing more than the meanest soldier of his bands. His advisers persisted nevertheless, and said that even though he could not avoid making his appearance at the battle which was then impending and was indeed inevitable, yet that he should take the first opportunity of flying and saving himself, since he might be certain that King Abderahman would receive him favourably and treat him well.

Some few days after this discourse had taken place, the battle was fought, when Muhamad Abulaswad took flight with a large portion of his cavalry; but this he did not attempt until the greater part of his foot-soldiers had been already slain, few having found means to deliver their lives from the edge of the sword that day. Razi tells us that this victory over the rebels was obtained by the people of Abderahman in the year 168, and on the fourth day of the first Rebie, which was two days after the conversation with Mohamad, and those proposals made to him by his friends which we have repeated above,—those friends being men who retained a grateful recollection of his father, and, though faithful to Abderahman, who were still desirous of Mohamad's welfare. The latter is reported to have lost four thousand men in that battle, to say nothing of as many more who were drowned in the Guadalimar, as they endeavoured

to pass that river when flying before the cavalry of Abderahman. Having left the field of strife, Muhamad himself returned to Castalana, but immediately afterwards left that city, and continued his flight towards the Algarve of Spain.

After that battle the king repaired to Cordova, where he was received with many proofs of joy; but he did not remain to take the repose which he needed, having determined to bring the struggle commenced by his rebels to an effectual close; he therefore departed almost immediately for the Comarcas of Merida, although the Alcaides of Beja, Badalyox, and Cantara-Alseif, would fain have had the king entrust the conclusion of the war to them, assuring him that they were of sufficient force to exterminate the rebels even to the last man. Abderahman commissioned the Alcaides of the two last mentioned towns to continue the pursuit of the insurgents, but the services of the Alcaide of Beja the king required in his Alcadia, whither he therefore desired him to proceed without delay, having first thanked and conferred on him many marks of his satisfaction for the good service already rendered.

After the battle of Castalona the rebel leaders had dispersed, one to one side, and one to another, each reproaching the others for the ill success of that day. Hafila, with a small body of men, fled in haste to the mountains of Segovia. Muhamad Abulwasad El Fehri, with such of his cavalry as remained to him, proceeded to the Comarcas of Algarve; but being pursued by the Alcaides of Badalyox and Cantara-Alseif, Muhamad was beaten in several skirmishes; and as his fortunes became more desperate, the few troops and partizans yet surrounding him began gradually to abandon the unhappy fugitive, and disperse, each to such shelter as he could find.

The son of Jusuf at length remained entirely alone, and had not even a servant—all had fled, and Muhamad stood without a follower in the world: wearied and sorrowful, he entered Cauria in a mean and squalid disguise, and remained there for some time in close concealment; but at length he was compelled to retire thence also, poor and unknown, without even an attendant: he then hid himself in the neighbouring woods, and prowling through those solitudes

like a hungry wolf, was soon reduced to look back upon the period of his obscurity and imprisonment at Toledo as one of peace and happiness. After a certain time passed in this manner, the sufferings of his miserable life had so changed the unfortunate Muhamad that he was enabled to pass unknown and secure, even through places where his person must otherwise have been recognised by many: he thus arrived, worn and emaciated, at Alarcon, a town and fort in the Comarca of Toledo, where he died in the course of the same year.

CHAP. XXIII.—Of the journey taken by Abderahman to Lusitania and Gallicia.

About this time, finding that the disturbances in that province which the rebels had so long infected were brought to a close, Abderahman set forth to visit the cities of Santarem, Lisbon, Portocale, Coimbra, Barâca, and others of Lusitania in the Algarve of Spain. In all these places the king commanded the erection of Aljamas and Mosques for the public use, for which purpose he assigned a part of the revenues arising from the Comarcas of each. Abderahman passed some time in the cities of Northern Spain also, leaving everywhere proofs of his benevolence, and care for the well-being of his people. By Astorga, Zamora, and Avila, he finally came to Medina Toledo, where he was received by his son Abdallah, and all the inhabitants of the city, with great demonstrations of gladness.

Having been informed that certain rebel hordes were still roaming through the Land of Tadmir, led by Casim, the younger son of Jusuf El Fehri, and by the General Hafila, who had gathered together all the loose vagabonds of the Comarca, Abderahman repaired in person to that district; but on arriving at the Sierras of Alcaraz, he received intelligence to the effect that the Walies of Tadmir had routed those bands, and that Abdallah, son of Abdelmelic Ben Omar Ben Meruan, having taken Casim Ben Jusuf prisoner, still held him under a strong guard. The king was then visiting the frontiers of Secura, which is a city built on the summit of a high mountain, insomuch that the citadel is

inaccessible. From the declivities of that height there descend two rivers, one of which is that called the Guadalquiver, which waters Cordova, and the other is the Guadalahiad, which flows through Murcia: the first takes its rise from the junction of numerous rivulets and springs, forming a clear lake in the bosom of the mountains, and, descending thence to the foot of them, it proceeds towards the west by Mount Nagida and Gadira, passes near Medina Ubeda and to the plain of Medina Bayesa, whence, taking its course by the fortress of Aldujar, by Alcozir, Cartara, and other cities, it finally reaches Cordova. The Guadalabiad, proceeding in like manner from the foot of the mountains, passes Murcia, Auriola, and other cities, whence it continues its course to the sea. When the journey of Abderahman had been prolonged until he reached Denia, he was there met by the messengers bringing him the head of the luckless Hafila, who had so often escaped from all the dangers of the most sanguinary battles to lose his life in a mere skirmish: but none can avoid the arrow which is levelled at him from the bow of his fate.

The king subsequently proceeded to Lorca and Murcia, remaining a considerable time in those cities, and not returning to Cordova until the year 170, when he was accompanied by the Wali Abdallah Ben Abdelmelic. A few days after his arrival, Casim, the son of Jusuf El Fehri, was presented to him in chains; the unhappy man implored the clemency of the king, and kissed the earth at his feet, when Abderahman, considering the inconstancy which distinguishes the fortunes of man, took compassion on the son of his enemy, and being, as he ever was, generous of his nature, commanded that the chains of the unfortunate Casim should be removed, conferring on him the gift of life, and adding the free pardon of his offences. The son of Jusuf El Fehri passed his days from that time forth in undissembled obedience to the king, who treated him with much honour, and endowed him with large possessions on the Comarcas of Seville, to the end that he might maintain his house in the state which befitted his rank.

CHAP. XXXIV.—Of the construction of the great mosque of cordova, the solemn oath taken by hixem, and the death of abderahman.

The desire for peace, which had ever been the most earnest wish entertained by Abderahman, being at length fulfilled, he signalized the first year in which that blessing was accorded to him, and which was the year of the Hegira 170, by commanding that the Great Aljama or Court of Justice, and the Mezquita Mayor or Great Mosque, should be constructed in the vicinity of his own palace. It is even related that the plans for those works were drawn by the king himself, who intended that the mosque should resemble that of Damascus, and be of greater extent than that of Bagdad, which it was also to surpass in splendour and magnificence; nay, he was even desirous that it should be equal, or at least comparable, to the Alaksa or Holy House* of Jerusalem. He placed therein many very precious columns of marble, the entrances being formed of nineteen lofty and spacious gates, to the end that its Alquibla† might be approached by nineteen aisles, formed of columns in different marbles finely carved; these were crossed by thirty-eight avenues or aisles proceeding from east to west, and on each of the sides were nine gates. Aben Hayun tells us that the height of the Alminar or Tower of this mosque was of forty Brazos,‡—a little more or less. The king carried forward this work with the utmost care and diligence, working himself daily therein for the space of one hour. The sum he spent on the edifice was more than one hundred thousand doubloons of gold; but it did not please God that he should see it completed: yet he had taken care to endow the colleges, schools, and hospitals that were to be attached to the building, and which were all of an extent in harmony with the magnificence of the Aljama.

The public instruction given at this period in Spain was

* The Moslemah venerate two temples or holy houses—that of the Caaba at Mecca and that of Jerusalem, which they call the Alaksa or Remote, because of its distance from Arabia.—*Condé.*

† Alquibla, the southern part.

‡ Each Brazo is something more than six feet.—Tr.

according to the opinions and sect of the Auzei,* whose doctrines had been introduced into Cordova by the Andalusian Saxato Ben Salema, who had been the disciple of the Auzei in the East. This learned man was likewise called the Damascene, and therefore some writers have declared him to have been a native of Damascus: he continued to teach at Cordova until the time of his death, which took place during the reign of the King Hixem, and in the year 180; although some say that he lived till 182.

Now Abderahman, desiring to reward the important services of the General Abdallah, son of Abdelmelic Ben Omar El Meruan, had offered him his grand-daughter Cathira, the daughter of Hixem, to wife; and when Abdallah claimed the fulfilment of the promise thus made, the king gave him his bride; when there were great feasts and rejoicings held in Cordova on that occasion.

At the end of the year 170, Abderahman assembled in Cordova the Walies of the six Capitanias of Spain,—Toledo, Merida, Saragossa, Valencia, Granada, and Murcia, namely, with the twenty-four Viziers of the same: and when all had gathered together in the presence of his Hagib, the Cadi of Cadies, and the Alcatibes, who were secretaries or counsellors of state, the king declared his son Hixem to be his Wali Alahdi, or future successor. All the Walies and Viziers present then took an oath of allegiance and loyalty to the King Abderahman for the period of his life, and after his death to his son Hixem, the declared successor to the throne; whereupon all by his order took the hand of Prince Hixem. The king gave this preference to Hixem over his other sons, Suleiman and Abdallah, although he was the youngest of the three, because he had ever given proof of much goodness of heart and rectitude of mind; yet some say that the Sultana Howara, mother of Hixem, had so entirely gained the heart of Abderahman that he had no other will than hers; and these affirm that it was by her porsuasions he was induced to show this preference for his son Hixem.

Suleiman and Abdallah, who had also taken the oath of

* The sect or school of Auźe preceded that of Malic Ben Anás in Spain. Among the Moslemah there are four approved sects,—those of Malic, Safei, Hanbal, and Hanifa.—*Condé.*

allegiance to Hixem, did not suffer the resentment they felt at being thus passed over to be seen; on the contrary, they concealed it from respect to their father's will, and during his life no complaint was made by those princes, nor did they permit any evidence of discontent to be manifest.

This affair concluded, the king dismissed his Walies, who departed to their provinces in the beginning of the year 171. Abderahman himself then went to Merida, leaving his son Abdallah in Cordova; but Prince Hixem accompanied the king. That monarch fell sick a few months after, and died of his malady, passing to the mercy of God on the 22nd* day of the Moon of Rebie, in the year 171, being then fifty-nine years and two months and four days old.

Thus did Abderahman Ben Moavia quit the perishing palaces of this lower world for the eternal dwellings of the other life. He was buried with great pomp, all the people of the city and the Comarcas following his mortal remains to the tomb, and not only did they accompany the train of his interment, but they honoured his grave with their tears. His son Hixem made the funeral oration, and he did so, as saith the writer who hath authority, on Tuesday, six days before the commencement of the Moon of the second Rebie.

In that same year of the death of Abderahman, Edris Ben Abdallah, who was of the posterity of Aly Ben Abi Taleb, made an irruption into Africa; and after he had wandered for some time among the African tribes, being aided by the tribe of Aruba and others of those of Barbary, he succeeded in wresting Almagreb from the hands of the Caliphs of the East, and founded that powerful state—the kingdom of Fez.

King Abderahman had his Zeka, or house for the coinage of money, in Cordova; he introduced no change in the currency, but retained the dies used in Syria by the Caliphs who were his predecessors, and made his coins in all respects similar to theirs, effecting no other difference in the inscription of the same, that only excepted which was necessitated by time and place. On one side we read, "There is no God

* Or, according to Alabar, on Tuesday, six days before the close of the second Rebie.—*Condé.*

but Allah, the sole God and who hath no equal;" around the edge were the words, "In the name of Allah, this Dinar or Adirham was stamped in Andalusia, in such a year;" and on the reverse was the inscription that follows,—"God is eternal: he is neither Son nor Father, nor is there any like Him;" around the edge were the following words,—"Mahomad the Messenger of Allah, who sent him with the mission of the true Law to make it manifest over every other law, to the confusion of the infidels."

CHAP. XXV.—OF THE KING HIXEM, AND HIS DISSENSIONS WITH HIS BROTHERS, THE PRINCES SULEIMAN AND ABDALLAH.

WHEN the King Abderahman Ben Moavia had been interred, and the honourable ceremonies of his funeral had all been completed, his son, the King Hixem, was solemnly proclaimed. He passed through the principal streets of Medina Merida with a great train of cavalry, and the Chotba or public prayer was made for him in all the Aljamas and principal mosques of Spain,* the people everywhere repeating these words: "May God exalt and protect our King Hixem, the son of Abderahman!"

At his accession Hixem was thirty years old: he was of majestic presence, of a mild and gentle disposition, very religious, and exact in the observance of the law; a man of much integrity, and a true lover of justice: for this last quality he was indeed so conspicuous as to merit the name of Aladil or the Just, by which we find him frequently called, and for his goodness he was furthermore named El Radhi, the Benign. His brothers Suleiman and Abdallah now no longer dissembled their resentment at the preference shown him by their father in appointing him the successor to his throne; they resolved to govern their provinces in

* The Chotba, or public prayer for the King, is one of the first rights of sovereignty among the Moslemah. It is to be made in all the principal mosques on every festival, and is pronounced from the Minbar or pulpit by the Chatib or preacher of the mosque. This prayer contains praises to God, benedictions on the Prophet, and supplications for the well-being of the King.—*Condé.*

absolute independence, bestowing Governments and Alcadias in them, or removing from those offices at their pleasure, and without consulting the king their brother, or informing him of what they had done. Abdallah, who was then at Cordova, left his own house and established himself in the Alcazar or palace, hoping that the Viziers and principal persons of the city would pay him the visit of welcome, but none did visit him, except at his private dwelling. That change of residence was made by Prince Abdallah in the Moon Giumada Primera of the year 171.

Undeceived as to the disposition of the people of Cordova, and their wish in that matter, by their refusal to pay him the visit of welcome, and not wishing to come to a sudden and public rupture with Hixem, he wrote letters requesting that his brother would give him permission to repair to Merida, and expressing a hope that he would no longer grieve his loyal subjects of Cordova by depriving them of his presence, seeing that they were desiring his arrival with much anxiety.

King Hixem then repaired at once to Cordova, where he was received with every possible evidence of gladness. Abdallah met his brother the king, with all the principal men of the city, and then repeated his request for permission to retire to his province, when Hixem replied that at least he should be content to remain some few days in his company: to which Abdallah made answer, "Let it please thee that I depart, Oh Ameer, for I do not feel myself at ease in this city." Hixem then gave him permission to do as he desired, and that same day Abdallah left Cordova.

The seal royal, and the charge of Hagib, King Hixem gave to the Wali Abu Omeya Abdelgafir Ben Abda, El Gehwara, who had previously been Governor of Seville.

When Suleiman learned that his brother Abdallah had arrived in Merida, he wrote to him desiring that he would repair to Toledo, to the end that they might there confer respecting their affairs, and agree between them as to what it was proper for them both to do. Abdallah therefore took his way to Medina Toledo accordingly, without asking leave of the king or giving him any intimation respecting his purpose. But the Vizier of Merida, a man of the purest loyalty, sent the king notice of the departure of Abdallah

from his government on the summons of his brother; and that intelligence troubled Hixem greatly, yet he did not make his dissatisfaction manifest; on the contrary, he replied to the Vizier with thanks for the information thus given him, but speaking as one who had already been made aware of the fact related.

The two brothers, Suleiman and Abdallah, meanwhile agreed to govern their provinces as absolute lords of the same, in perfect independence of their brother the King of Cordova; making a compact, moreover, by which they bound themselves to defend their sovereignty in common. They had called to their counsel the Vizier of Toledo, Galib Ben Temam El Tzakifi; but he, being loyal and true to his king, opposed himself to their pretensions, and declared his determination to resist whatever attempts might be made on the rights of the sovereign his master. Offended by his firmness, Suleiman commanded that he should be thrown into prison and loaded with chains. Now the conference of his brothers had not been made known to King Hixem without causing him much anxiety, and he anticipated serious evils therefrom; but when the imprisonment of Galib was also reported to him, he wrote at once to Suleiman, informing the prince that he had been made aware of the incarceration of the honoured Vizier Galib, and adding that it was injustice on the part of his brother to permit him to remain in ignorance of the cause which had led to that proceeding, seeing how much the fate of his good and loyal servants concerned him their sovereign; he therefore desired to be informed of the cause of that step without delay.

On receiving this letter, the heart of Suleiman was kindled to anger, and in the heat of his rage he commanded that Galib should be taken from his prison and impaled. He then turned to the messenger of the king with these words, "Say to thy lord that he will do well to let us rule quietly in our narrow provinces, seeing that this liberty is not a great compensation for the injury and privation which we are compelled to endure by his exaltation: do thou relate to him moreover how much his untimely attempt at sovereignty over us has here availed."

Filled with a just indignation at the boldness and dis-

obedience of his brothers, King Hixem then wrote to all the Walies and Alcaides of the realm, commanding them to consider those princes and all who should take part with them, as the enemies of the state, to defend their cities and fortresses against them, and to afford them no refuge in the provinces under their command, since their insubordination was thus made public and could no longer be concealed. He furthermore commanded that his cavalry and other troops should be assembled, and with a force of 20,000 men he at once departed for Toledo.

This movement of troops did not remain unknown to Suleiman, who on his part called his province to arms and gathered 15,000 men: then, leaving the charge of defending Toledo to his brother Abdallah and his own son, he set forth to encounter the troops of Andalusia.

At the same time, Said Ben Husein, Wali of Tortosa, likewise set himself to resist the commands of the king, and refused to admit into the city the new Wali whom Hixem had appointed to succeed him in his government, whereupon the Wali of Valencia received orders to proceed without delay to Tortosa and castigate the rebel. The cavalry of Valencia and that of Murbiter, with the people of Nulis, assembled accordingly, but before they could reach Tortosa, Said Ben Husein came forth against them, and a sanguinary contest ensued. It is true that the people of Valencia did in the first instance put the rebels led by Said to flight, but when pursuing their advantage they fell into an ambush which had been laid for them. All fought with great bravery, and the carnage was great on both sides; but the Wali of Valencia, Muza Ben Hodeira El Keisi, having been wounded to the death, his troops were compelled to leave the field to the rebels. This battle and the death of the Wali of Valencia took place in the beginning of the year 172.

No sooner was the King Hixem informed of this check, than, fearing lest that success on the part of the insurgents should encourage them and add to their boldness, he charged the Walies of Granada and Murcia to despatch their troops to Valencia, commanding that these forces, added to those of the new governor of that city, Abu Otman, should immediately proceed to the castigation of Said Ben Husein.

CHAP. XXVI.—Of the battle of Bulche and the subjugation of the princes.

The army of the king was meanwhile proceeding to punish the disobedience of Suleiman, who had openly excited the people to revolt, and assembled troops to maintain his independence and that of his brother Abdallah. The two hosts met near the fortress of Bulche, when, no otherwise than as if they had been enemies of the Law, of different languages, and of opposite creeds, they mingled in a sanguinary contest, which continued with great fury on both sides, for the greater part of the day. At the setting of the sun the troops of Suleiman resigned the field, the fall of night only preventing him from being completely routed; but under favour of the darkness he retired in tolerably good order, and took refuge in the mountains. The conquering army then passed on to the city of Toledo, which they besieged, Prince Abdallah defending it with much intelligence and bravery, he being aided moreover by the advantageous position of the fortress.

Nor did Suleiman long remain idle; descending from the mountains he assembled his whole force and made incursions on the Plains or level country immediately around Cordova. He also occupied the fortress of Sefonda, but Abdallah Ben Abdelmelic El Meruan at once came forth against him, and having beaten him near Cordova, he drove him from Sefonda likewise, compelling him again to return to the mountains, and take shelter within their gorges.

From Petroxis and Maltamisa, Suleiman then despatched messengers to the Vizier of Merida and the principal generals of that Comarca, soliciting them to join him in the enterprise he had undertaken; but whatever hopes he may have formed on that point were vain; instead of assisting, they took arms against him, and pursued by the cavalry of Abdallah El Meruan, he was compelled to return towards the land of Tadmir by the paths of the mountains. The battle of Bulche was fought in the year 173.

Abdallah now perceived that his brother Suleiman was not likely to succeed in joining him at Medina Toledo, and the provisions stored in the city having been nearly exhausted the forces and good will of the garrison were seen to diminish in like proportion. The dissatisfaction of the defenders was indeed increasing daily, and Abdallah, knowing that his brother Hixem, after remaining ten weeks in his camp before the town, had repaired for a short time to Cordova, prepared to take measures for the amelioration of his affairs. He directed his nephew, the son of Suleiman, who held part with him in the command, to maintain the defence as long as he could prevail on the garrison to second him, and if possible until his (Abdallah's) return, which, as the latter promised his nephew should not be delayed, when he would bring troops for the continuation of the defence, or would then surrender the place on the most favourable conditions he could obtain from the king, since it was no longer possible to retain possession of the town in the condition to which it was then reduced, being as it was on the brink of starvation, and wanting every muniment of war.

A vizier of Abdallah then went forth to the camp of the besiegers with a request that the Walies of the royal army should give safe conduct and an escort to ambassadors who were about to be sent to king Hixem with proposals of surrender. When this was accorded, Abdallah himself left the city with his vizier, but in disguise and bearing the name of another man. Two cavaliers were then appointed by the royal Walies to conduct the messengers of the besieged princes to Cordova, and when they reached the Alcazar, Abdallah sent forward his vizier to announce his approach to his brother. The king received him with open arms, seeing that it was not in his nature to do otherwise; the surrender of Toledo was agreed on, and Hixem forgave all past offences—nay, he even promised to pardon the much more guilty Suleiman, provided that prince would resign himself to the mercy of his sovereign, so soon as the surrender of Toledo should be made known to him. The king then left Cordova for Toledo in company with Abdallah, but before they arrived at the camp, Abdallah and his vizier went forward to the city in order to make the necessary dispositions for the surrender, which was effected accord-

ingly, to the great joy of the inhabitants. Hixem then proceeded to take possession of the Alcazar, accompanied by his brother, his nephew, and the powerful officers of his army; the day of his entrance being kept as a great festival in Medina Toledo. The king permitted his brother Abdallah to take up his residence at a royal abode, which was situate in the immediate vicinity of the town, and in a very agreeable position.

When the intelligence of this surrender reached Suleiman, it caused him much regret; yet he did not wholly lose courage, because he still hoped to find support for his vain pretensions in the perfidy of seditious and discontented men, and promised himself that no long time should elapse before he could claim the assistance of such auxiliaries, for the evil purpose of once more disturbing his brother in the possession of his throne, and destroying the peace of the country.

The king was meanwhile well aware of Suleiman's intentions, and knew that he was then in the land of Tadmir levying troops and exhorting the towns to rise against their king. He therefore commanded his Walies to prepare forces and proceed to seek the disobedient prince. The command of the vanguard, Hixem intrusted on that occasion to his son Alhakem, but as this was the first time that he had led men to war, his father took care that he should have experienced generals at his side. That portion of the army then departed, being composed of the very flower of the cavalry; the day after it had left Cordova, the main body and all the remainder of the force prepared to follow.

The troops of Suleiman were in the plains of Lorca, and Alhakem, without awaiting the arrival of his father, with the host he commanded, fell at once upon the rebel army, and by force of numbers, aided withal by the determined energy of his attack, the young general routed the enemy, whom he put to a disorderly flight; but many of his own men as well as of the foes lay stretched upon the field, a welcome festival to the wild beasts of the desert and the birds of prey. When Hixem arrived, therefore, he found no enemy with whom to join battle, nor did he fail to laud the youthful prince and his brave warriors, but he warned the former that if boldness and bravery be needful to good war-

fare, so are also prudence and consideration, and that it is not well to commence the attack too hastily, since precipitation and rashness, even though in part successful, often cause the triumph to be less complete, and invariably render it more uncertain. He added that many generals had lost battles of great importance from the fear of giving a share in the glory they hoped for, to those who might otherwise have partaken their triumphs, instead of taking part in their defeat; he assured his son that an unwise confidence and weak pride in their own forces had often caused the ruin of brave and otherwise able generals, and, as he furthermore declared, had even brought about the destruction of states, thereby affixing an indelible stain on the reputation of him who had been too eager to cover himself with glory.

Suleiman was not with his army on the day of the battle, and when the broken remnants of his host brought him intelligence of their defeat, he remained for some time lost in thought. Without uttering a syllable beyond these few words—"My fate has not been kind to me"—he then mounted his horse, and accompanied by a small body of cavalry, departed towards Valencia, but without having arranged any settled plan of action. Approaching Denia, he was compelled to turn aside by the presence of his brother's outlying companies, and took refuge in Gezira, a strongly fortified town watered by the river, whence he wrote to the king his brother begging pardon for the past, and entreating to be received to favour on the same conditions as those accorded to Abdallah, or otherwise as king Hixem might determine.

Hixem was much rejoiced by that submission, and having taken counsel with his Walies and Viziers, consented to grant the forgiveness desired; but he proposed that Suleiman should sell his possessions in Spain, and pass over to the West of Africa, where he might establish himself in Tangiers, or whatever other city of those districts he might prefer, replacing his lands in Spain by others which he might acquire in Barbary—a measure which all thought desirable for the security of both the brothers. To these terms Suleiman submitted, and the treaty of agreement was made in the year 174. King Hixem is said to have paid his

brother 60,000 mitcales or pieces of gold, as the price of his possessions, and Suleiman departed to settle in Tangiers.

In this same year, Abu Otman, Wali of Valencia, routed the rebel Said Ben Husein, who was killed in the battle fought between them; when Abu Otman sent his head to the king, who caused it to be hung on a hook in the wall at Cordova.

CHAP. XXVII.—Of the rebellion and war in eastern Spain.

While the princes were thus disturbing the peace of their brother and sovereign, a rebellion broke out in the East of Spain, where the general commanding on that frontier, Bahlul Ben Makluc Abulhegiag, rose in open revolt and took possession of the city of Saragossa, being joined by the governors of Barcelona, Huesca, and Tarascona. Abu Otman, the Wali of Valencia, was sent against them with a large army of horse and foot, and having defeated them in several battles, he obtained possession of the cities they had seized, the inhabitants of which opened their gates to him with gladness, rejoicing to be delivered from the vexations and oppressions to which they had been subjected by the rebel leaders, and to be restored to the protection of their lord and king. They consequently did their best to aid Abu Otman in such measures as he thought fit to take for their defence. The successful Wali then sent intelligence of his victories to Cordova, with the heads of certain among the rebel chiefs: these triumphs were celebrated in Cordova with public rejoicings, and the king wrote to Abu Otman requiring him to repair to the frontier of Afranc, there to await a reinforcement of his army, on the reception of which he was then to attempt the recovery of such cities as the Moslemen had lost on that frontier.

In the year 175 King Hixem caused the Algihed or Holy War to be proclaimed through all Spain; he sent his letters to all the Captainries, and these were read from the pulpits or Almimbares of all the Aljamas, when every good Moslem became anxious to take part in the same, if not in

person, then by the supply of arms, or at the least by liberal contributions, to the intent that each might merit his part in those ineffable delights which are the rich reward promised to all who give their aid in so excellent an undertaking. King Hixem confided the charge of such troops as he despatched towards the frontier, to his Hagib, the Wali Abdelwahid Ben Mugueit, and to his son-in-law Abdallah Ben Abdelmelic Ben Meruan, with whom Jusuf Ben Bath El Ferasi was furthermore conjoined. These hosts entered the land of Guf, which is the North of Spain, when one of the divisions, thirty thousand strong, fell suddenly upon the provinces of Asturia and Lugo, taking much spoil and many captives; extending their irruptions through all Gallicia, they threw the towns into such terror as might well be caused by that devastating tempest, which left desolation and misery wherever it appeared. Another division turned eastward towards the mountains of Albortat,* and that force likewise subjugated the towns along its path, made prey of the flocks, and carried the people into captivity.

In the year 176 the Moslemah forces continued their incursions in the Basque mountains, through the passes of which they penetrated into the land of Afranc, which is France, when the people abandoned their dwellings, and fled to hide themselves in the dens of wild beasts. In this year there died at Seville the Walilcoda of the Aljama of that city, Abdallah Ben Omar, Ben Alchitab namely, a man of singular integrity and great learning.

In the year 177 the city of Gerona was taken by force of arms, and its inhabitants were put to the sword. The same fate befel Medina Narbona, which is Narbonne, where the sword of the Moslemah made so terrible a carnage among the defenders and inhabitants of the place, that the number of those destroyed can be known to none save God who created them. The spoils of these cities were very great and rich,—gold, silver, and precious raiment abounded, the fifth part, which was the share of King Hixem, having been valued at more than 45,000 mitcales, or pieces of gold.

When these riches and the news of these fortunate expeditions arrived in Cordova, there were great rejoicings in that capital. The king had long destined all that portion of

* The French Pyrenees.—Tr.

those spoils which belonged to himself for the great Mosque and Aljama of Cordova, to the use of which they were immediately assigned. He left the Wali Abdallah Ben Abdelmelic to continue the war on the frontier, having first appointed him Governor of Saragossa.

CHAP. XXVIII.—OF THE BUILDINGS ERECTED AND WORKS PERFORMED BY KING HIXEM.

THESE fortunate and successful deeds of arms caused King Hixem to be greatly dreaded by his enemies, and much beloved by his people, while his clemency, liberality, and the kindliness of his heart, gained him the good will of every man. He was very charitable to the poor of all creeds, and would frequently pay the ransom of such as had fallen into the hands of their enemies. He was also very careful of the widows and children of his own people who had died in the wars. Very pious, moreover, was King Hixem, and he laboured daily at the works of the Aljama, as his father Abderahman had done. Thus he succeeded in having the building completed within his own time. That magnificent Aljama of Cordova surpassed all others throughout the land. It was six hundred feet long and two hundred and fifty wide; the columns formed thirty naves, counting in the width, or from side to side, and nineteen, counting in the length from end to end. The columns supporting the roof were ten hundred and ninety-three, and they were wholly of marble. The alquibla, or southern part, was approached by nineteen portals covered with metal plates of wonderfully beautiful workmanship, the laminæ which covered the principal gate being of gold; on each of the sides, the east and west, that is to say, there were nine gates. Over the highest cupola were three gilded balls, and above them was placed a pomegranate of gold. Two thousand seven hundred lamps were lighted for the time of the evening prayer; and these annually consumed twenty-four thousand pounds of oil; while one hundred and twenty pounds of aloes and amber were expended in the perfumes. The Atanor of the Mihrab, or Lamp of the Oratory, was of gold; it was very large, and of marvellous workmanship.*

* "This prolixity of description," remarks our author, "is always to be found among Arabian writers. The author of the History of

Hixem likewise rebuilt the bridge of Cordova, and performed other works in various parts of the city, repairing numerous public edifices; and at this time it was that Farkid Ben Aun, El Aduani, a native of Cordova, constructed the beautiful fountain which, from his name, is called Ain Farkid. This, which is one of the most exquisite structures in Cordova, was erected solely for the gratification of the king.

Hixem conferred the charge of Wali of the Zoco, or public square of Cordova, on Suleiman Ben Foteis, who had been Cadi in the time of King Abderahman. His annual appointments were five hundred gold doubloons.

At the end of the year 177, Abdelkerim, son of the Wali of the frontier, Abdelwahid, made an irruption into Gallicia; and after having wasted the country, occupied or dismantled the fortresses, and burnt the churches of the Christians, was on his return loaded with his spoils, when he was surrounded by the Christian troops, at a place where they had laid an effectual ambuscade, and the Moslemah force sustained a great defeat. They moreover lost all the booty they had taken, while their captives recovered their liberty. The bravest of their number died fighting, and among these was Jusuf Ben Bath.*

In the same year Abdelcadir, another general of King Hixem, fell upon the barbarians of Takerua, who had rebelled; and having taken vast numbers of them prisoners, he caused them to be nailed to stakes, making such a carnage of that people as to leave all their land desolate and depopulated. In this year Edris Ben Abdallah, the descendant of Aly, and who was the founder of the city and kingdom of Fez, departed from life. He died, treach-

Fez, Abdelhalim of Granada, recounts even to the number of carpets by which the Aljama of that city was covered; that is to say, 47,300 pieces. He tells us, likewise, that there were fifteen large doors for the use of the men, with two smaller ones for that of the women; and says that the building was lighted by 1700 lamps, but adds, that they were not all kindled except in the Nights of Ramazan, and in that called the Night of Candles. Thus the greater number were for ornament and ostentation."—*Condé.*

* According to Alabas, Jusuf Ben Bath El Ferasi did not die at this time, but departed from life some time later at Medina Toledo, after having led the forces of his sovereign in other expeditions.—*Condé.*

erously poisoned by the Caliph of the East, who sent him a ball of perfume for that purpose; and this gift, in which Edris suspected no evil, being presented to him by the emissary of the Caliph, he died from the effects thereof, as here related. He had no son when he departed, but one of his wives, a beautiful Alaraba, called Kethira, the daughter of Jelid, was in a late month of her pregnancy, and expecting the birth of her child; the Alarabes therefore persuaded the loyal Hagib, Baxid, to await the result, which he did; and during the minority of the prince, who was subsequently born, and was also called Edris, the people were governed by the Hagib of their beloved king.

The most illustrious poet of his time, Amer Ben Abi Giafar, also died this year in Cordova. He wrote elegant histories, and was Cadim al Maut, or Intendant of all those inheritances which fell to the Fisc; such property, that is to say, as was inherited by the king, when no other heir was to be found.

King Hixem was one day amusing himself among the pleasant fields, shady groves, and delightful gardens of the Comarca near Cordova, when certain of his courtiers, perceiving him to remark a beautiful country-house with very fruitful lands appertaining thereto, said many things by way of persuading him to purchase the same, seeing that the property was in every respect desirable and profitable, and that many persons were emulously seeking to buy and become masters of those lands; but the king was not disposed to make the purchase recommended; and on that occasion he composed certain verses, which may serve to show his genius and the greatness of his mind. They are in effect as follows:

"A true blazon of nobility
Is the frank and liberal hand;
But to heap up riches
Hath ever been the disdain of great souls.

"I delight in the flowery gardens;
I love the soft, fair sôlitudes;
I gladly breathe the breath of the fields;
But would not hold the homes of other men in my hand,
And covet not to be master of all mine eyes behold.

"All that God hath given me is but lent,
To the end that I return it to His just care.
And while Fortune is still my friend,
Let me plunge with open hand, but for the welfare of others,
Into the fathomless deeps of beneficence.

"In the days of tempest and the hateful war,
It is time that I bathe the strong right hand
In the turbulent sea of blood,
And take largely from the wealth of my foes;
But whether I seize the sword or wield the pen,
I would do all to the glory of God;
And leaving Fate to the contemplation of the learned,
With the moon in her splendour and the council of stars,
Would seek only the refuge of the Maker."

CHAP. XXIX.—Of the homage offered to prince Alhakem, and the death of king Hixem.

In the year 178, King Hixem being at Cordova, was recreating himself in his Almunias and beautiful gardens, where he amused his leisure by the cultivation of flowers and plants, when a certain astrologer said to him: "My lord, you should labour in these short days for the period of eternity." The king then enquired wherefore the astrologer had addressed that remark to him at that moment; but the astrologer begged that Hixem would not command him to speak further, declaring that he had spoken without thinking of what he said.

But the king insisted that he should not conceal his thought, certain that nothing he might say could possibly offend his ear. Then the astrologer informed his master that it was written in the heavens that before two years Hixem must die. Yet the monarch was not saddened by the announcement of his approaching and early death. He continued in conversation to the usual hour, listened to those who sung before him, played as usual his game of chess, and commanded that a handsome robe should be given to the astrologer. Several times he repeated these words: "My confidence is in God, and in Him is my hope."

King Hixem established schools of the Arabic language in Cordova, and forbade the Christians to speak any other,

nor would he permit them to write in their Latin tongue. And now, although this sovereign was superior to the belief of the vulgar as respects the influence of the stars on human destiny, being well persuaded that all things are moved by the breath of the Divine will, and according to the eternal decrees, yet he would not defer the solemn declaration of his future successor in the empire. Hixem therefore commanded the Walies and Viziers to assemble with the Alcatibes, or secretaries, and counsellors of state, when he declared to the Cadi of the Cadies of Spain, and to his Hagib, that his Wali Alahdi, or future successor, was the Prince Alhakem, his son. Thereupon all the Walies, Viziers, and principal Xeques of Spain, took the oath of obedience to Alhakem. They offered him their allegiance without restriction, condition, or reserve; each man taking him by the hand. The prince was then twenty-two years old; he was of a pleasing aspect and good disposition. That solemn oath of allegiance was taken in the year 179.

In the first days of the moon Safir, and in the year 180, King Hixem fell sick, and of that infirmity he died on the twelfth day of the same moon, departing to the mercy of Allah. We find it related that before his death the king gave the good counsels that follow to his son Alhakem; but we find also that other writers attribute these exhortations to Abderahman, the father of Hixem.

"Deposit in thy heart and never forget these counsels which I desire to give thee, oh, my son! for the great love that I bear thee.

"Consider well that all empire is in the hand of God, who bestoweth it on whom he will, and from whom he will he taketh it away. But since God hath given to us the royal authority and power, which is in our hands by his goodness only, let us obey his Holy Will, which is no other than that we do good to all men, and in especial to those placed under our protection. See thou, therefore, O my son, that thou distribute equal justice to rich and poor, nor permit that any wrong or oppression be committed in thy kingdom, for by Injustice is the road to Perdition. Be clement and do right to all who depend upon thee, for all are the creatures of God.

"Confide the government of thy provinces and cities to

none but good and experienced men. Let the ministers who oppress thy people with arbitrary exactions be punished without fail. When necessity compels thee to place arms in the hands of thy troops, do thou govern them with mildness, yet firmly, and let them be the defenders, not the devastators and destroyers of thy people and realm; but beware that thou keep them well paid, and maintain thy promises to them, that so they may rely on thy word.

"Neglect not those qualities which gain the affection of the people, for in their good will consists the security of the State; while in their fear there is much danger, and in their hatred unfailing destruction.

"Protect the labourers who cultivate the earth, and suffer none to destroy their crops or cut up their plants and trees: at a word, do thou so govern that thy people may bless thee and live content under the shadow of thy protection and bounty; let thy subjects enjoy the advantages and pleasures of life in security; in this consists good government, which, if thou succeed in establishing, be sure that thy days shall be happy, and thou shalt secure the reputation of being the most glorious prince of the world."

King Hixem made no change in the manner of the coinage, which was formed on the same type and under the same regulations as in the reign of Abderahman his father. This sovereign, even Hixem Ben Abderahman, died when he was thirty-seven years and four months old: the duration of his reign was seven years and seven months.

In the same year and month there died in Cordova the traveller Said Ben Abdus, known by the name of El Godei. He was an Andalusian by birth, and having journeyed to the East there became the disciple of Malic Ben Anas: he subsequently returned to his native country with great fame for wisdom and learning.

CHAP. XXX.—OF THE KING ALHAKEM BEN HIXEM, OF THE DISTURBANCES EXCITED BY HIS UNCLES, AND OF THE VICTORIES OBTAINED IN EASTERN SPAIN.

WHEN the good King Hixem had been carried to his tomb, whither he was followed by a great concourse of the people, and when his son the Prince Alhakem had made the funeral oration over him, the latter was proclaimed king with much pomp; a ceremony which took place on the fourteenth day of the moon Safir in the year 180. On the first Juma, which was the sixteenth day of the same moon, the new sovereign repaired to the Mezquita Mayor, or principal Mosque, where the Chotba or public prayer was made on his behalf. The mother who bore Almakem was called Zecraf. Of handsome person, and believed to be of amiable disposition, the king was also in the very flower of his age, since he was then but twenty-two years old. All hoped to have in him a worthy successor of his father: his noble countenance seemed to promise that blessing, while the good education he had received, and the excellent examples set him, gave warrant for the hope: but God alone is He who knows what shall follow the moment in our possession. Alhakem was highly informed and of acute understanding, but he was vain, hard-hearted, and prone to anger. He had been brought up from childhood with Abdelkerim, the son of Abdelwalid, who was the Hagib of King Hixem. That youth had early distinguished himself among those of his age for his ready genius and elegant verses; Alhakem valued him for his learning, and appointed him, while still very young, to be his librarian: he now made him his Hagib, and Abdelkerim was the person in whom he reposed the greatest confidence.

When Suleiman and Abdallah, uncles of the present king Alhakem, were informed of their brother Hixem's death, they renewed their pretensions to the sovereignty of Spain, or at the least of some among the provinces of that land, of the possession of which they still considered themselves to have been wrongfully despoiled. They now sought to

gather partizans and assemble forces against their nephew, whom they hoped to dethrone if Fortune should prosper their enterprise, or in case of a less favourable result they still believed it probable that they should obtain new conditions, or perhaps a division of the kingdom of Spain to their profit.

Buoyed up by these hopes, the people of Toledo, Valencia, and Tadmir, were excited to rebellion by their means; and Suleiman, assisted by his friends, and freely dispersing the treasures he possessed, succeeded in assembling a considerable army, with which he passed over from Africa into Spain, calling himself sovereign of that country, as being the eldest son of King Abderahman Ben Moavia.

Abdallah, who was then in the territory of Toledo, had found means to gain over certain Alcaides of that Comarca to his party, more particularly Obeida Ben Amza, a bold and crafty man, who placed at his disposal the fortresses of Uclis, Huelde, and Santiberia, with some other places of less importance. He assembled troops, moreover, and obtained possession of Toledo, with its gates and Alcazar. This was in the year 181.

The King Alhakem was quickly informed of his uncles' machinations, but he did not suffer himself to be intimidated; young and brave, the commander of experienced soldiers, and well supplied with the means of war, he looked forward with indifference to the long and perilous contest with which he was threatened, resolving to maintain his sovereignty intact or to die in its defence. He at once gave orders for the levy of his forces; and the cavalry of Arcos, Xeres, Sidonia, Seville, and Cordova, being joined by the foot-soldiers from the Comarcas of Merida and Toledo, the king commanded their immediate departure for the field.

Alhakem was proceeding with these troops against the city of Toledo, and had arrived in the vicinity of that town, when there came messengers from the frontier of France, informing him of a defeat sustained by the Moslemah generals Bahlul and Abu Tahic, who had been routed by the Christians, these last having also occupied the cities of Narbonne and Gerona, and being then about to march with a powerful host against other towns of the eastern frontier.

The king then held a council of war, and immediately afterwards he ordered that the Wali Foteis Ben Suleiman should take a body of the cavalry and hasten with all speed to succour the generals of the frontier, assembling the people of Eastern Spain as he proceeded on his way, and being joined by the Walies of Saragossa and Huesca. It was furthermore decided that if the siege of Toledo should threaten to become a protracted one, the king should in that case himself proceed to the frontiers of France, leaving the care of maintaining the blockade of that town to the general Amru, with the foot-soldiers and a part of the cavalry.

Before reaching Saragossa, the Wali Foteis received intelligence to the effect that Hasan, the Wali of Huesca, had surrendered his city to the enemy on terms that were ruinous to the interests of the king and disgraceful to himself: he was at the same time informed of the loss of Pampeluna, which had likewise been taken by the Christians. These fatal news were sent by Abdelsalem Ben Walid, Cadi of Huesca, who declared, moreover, that the Walies of that frontier, accustomed to independence in their governments, now sought to maintain themselves therein by vile policy and unworthy arts, desiring the favour and friendship of the Christians, in the hope that these would assist and uphold them in their disobedience to their lawful king, whom they had no desire to serve or obey: but, he added, that when, unable longer to endure the oppressive tyranny of their Christian allies, they wished to cast them off in their turn, these dishonoured men then feigned themselves good Moslemah, and had recourse to the shelter and protection never refused by their sovereign. Abdelsalem furthermore declared that they would ensure the loss of the whole country if a timely check were not put to their proceedings.

These accounts troubled the king Alhakem greatly, and he at once repaired to the frontier of Eastern Spain, taking with him a large body of troops composed of the flower of his cavalry. He was joined, moreover, by many of his Walies, with a numerous host, and gradually recovered the cities of Huesca and Lerida, the Christians who had possession of them not daring to await his arrival. Alhakem then proceeded to Gerona and Barcelona, whence he pressed forward to the Land of France, and entering Narbonne

he cut in pieces every Christian that fell into his hands; he also took captive a large number of women and children, and finding great and precious spoils in the city he returned laden with incalculable riches. For this glorious expedition Alhakem received the name of Almudafar, or the fortunate and happy conqueror.

The generals now left to guard the frontier were Abdelkerim Ben Abdelwahid and Foteis Ben Suleiman, while the king himself hastened to the territory of Toledo, where his uncles, Suleiman and Abdallah, with an army assembled from Africa, Tadmir, and Valencia, were daily increasing their strength and extending their influence, they having already occupied numerous towns in those Comarcas. The Walies of Cordova and Merida were already doing their best to hold the princes in check, and had engaged them several times with various results, now good and now bad; but on the arrival of the king there was an immediate amelioration in the fortune of their arms.

The force of Alhakem was composed of brave and experienced soldiers, well accustomed to the fatigues of war and maturely practised in fight, even against the most formidable enemies; while the people of Prince Abdallah, although numerous, were for the most part mere adventurers, men from Africa and the West, attracted to Spain by the reports they had heard of her riches and the spoil to be made in the cities of the land. Nay, still worse, they were in many cases miserable vagabonds from the Spanish provinces, who had been induced to join the bands of the Princes by the pressure of poverty or by the dread of punishment for their crimes. Thus Alhakem promptly routed the host of his uncles, and drove them from the territory of Toledo. He then re-occupied the towns that had been seized by the rebels, whom he compelled to retire into the land of Tadmir and the province of Valencia. This happened in the year 183.

CHAP. XXXI.—Of the new victories gained by Alhakem, the death of Suleiman, and the compact made with Abdallah.

In the beginning of the following year, the people of Toledo entered into secret negociations with the king's general,

Amru, and gave him admission into the city; they furthermore gave up the rebel chief Obeida Ben Amza, whose head was immediately cut off and sent to Cordova. Amru then left his own son Jusuf in the government of Toledo, and departed with the news of his victories to the camp of Gingilia, where the king then was. Alhakem then proceeded to the land of Tadmir, and after certain skirmishes between detached bodies of his troops and the African campeadors of Suleiman, the two armies, as of one accord, fell each upon the other with equal hatred and similar hope of victory. They fought all day with admirable valour; but towards evening, the people of Alhakem, inspired by the bravery of their leaders and the example set them by the king, made a charge that proved irresistible on the troops of the princes, whom they broke and threw into disorder, notwithstanding the lion-like valour of Suleiman and Abdallah, who clearly proved that day whose sons they were. Prince Suleiman in particular, labouring to restore order to his broken and disordered ranks, pressed forward into the midst of the most impetuous among his opponents, insomuch that he alone made the victory doubtful, even when it seemed most disposed to declare for Alhakem.

Abdallah likewise fought bravely, and, with a few cavaliers devoted to his service, frequently infused new courage into the disheartened and disappointed troops they led. The king, therefore, perceiving that the valiant efforts of these few brave warriors alone impeded and detained the car of victory, hastened to meet them with his Zenetes. At the same moment an arrow pierced the throat of Suleiman, who fell from his horse, and was there trampled to death beneath the feet of the cavalry. Abdallah, who saw his brother fall, then followed the flight of their defeated bands; but night alone suspended the horrors of that atrocious carnage, which Alhakem suffered his people to continue even after victory had declared for his banners. Availing himself of the obscurity, Prince Abdallah, having got clear of the field, withdrew from the mass of the flying soldiery and took refuge in the mountains, whence he continued his retreat by Denia and the Comarcas of Valencia.

On the day following the battle, the troops of Alhakem expected that the army of the princes, being composed of so-

large a host, would seek to renew the struggle, nor did they entertain a doubt but that they should then perfect their victory; yet it was not without satisfaction that they perceived their enemy to have disappeared. They soon discovered the corpse of Prince Suleiman among the bodies of the slain; and when it was brought to the king, he could not refrain from tears when he remembered the affection borne by his father to the dead warrior. He commanded that his remains should be very honourably interred, and detained all his army on the spot to that end.

Abdallah, who was still accompanied by many of his African followers, had meanwhile taken refuge in Valencia, where he was much beloved; but those of the city, although they gladly received him to shelter, exhorted him to seek a reconciliation with the king his nephew; and he, anxious to put an end to the calamities which his brother and himself had brought on the country, without in any manner ameliorating their own condition, sent his envoys to Alhakem accordingly, desisting from all his pretensions, giving himself up to the mercy of the king, and declaring himself ready to pass into Africa, or whithersoever his nephew might command him to proceed.

Alhakem on his part, desiring much to terminate the war that year, received the messengers of his uncle very favourably, requiring from the fallen prince nothing more than that he should suffer his sons to reside at Cordova as hostages. For himself, he was at liberty to fix his dwelling where he pleased. Abdallah thereupon retired to Tangiers, and sent his two sons to Alhakem, who received them with much affection and treated them as his kinsmen. He assigned to Prince Abdallah a revenue of a thousand mitcales monthly, with the addition of 5,000 mitcales at the end of each year, permitting him, moreover, to make his abode in any one of the country palaces near Valencia or Tadmir. The king furthermore forgave all the Xeques and Viziers who had been induced to adopt the party of his uncles, as had indeed been stipulated by Abdallah in the compact made between them. Many of the African cavaliers were received by Alhakem into the regiments of his guard, and all of them were treated by him with the greatest favour; to the eldest son of Abdallah, who was called Esfah, Alhakem even gave his sister Alkinza to wife. The war thus

happily concluded, the king returned to Cordova; where he was received with great rejoicing: this was towards the end of the year 184.

CHAP. XXXII.—Of the irruption of the people of Afranc, which is France, into eastern Spain.

In the following year the Christians of Afranc made numerous incursions upon the East of Spain; they laid siege to Geron, which city they compelled to surrender, and then proceeded to besiege Barcelona likewise; but that place was well defended by the Moslemah, and held out for a considerable time. Conducted and mainly upheld by the rebel Bahlul Ben Makluc Abulhegiag, the Christians descended with their light cavalry even to Tarragona and the Comarcas of Tortosa, when King Alhakem commanded that a force should proceed to castigate the rebel Makluc and restrain the boldness of those infidels.

Now at that time there was born to Alhakem a son in Cordova, to whom, considering his birth of happy omen and a presage of felicity, he gave the name of Said El Chair,* hoping that this auspicious birth was but the prelude to that successful result for the expedition then about to be undertaken, which he had flattered himself that he should obtain.

When the cavalry and foot-soldiers, having been united, were on the point of departure, there arrived intelligence to the effect that Barcelona had surrendered to the enemy; that city was in fact occupied by the Infidels of Afranc at the end of the year 185, but not until it had endured a siege of seven months. The king himself therefore departed instantly for the East of Spain, accompanied by the Wali Amru and the General of Cavalry, Mohamad Ben Mofreg El Fontauri, who belonged to the Garbia† of Cordova, which is near Ain Fontauri; he is also known as El Cobbaxi, because he had his residence near Ain Cobboxi, or the Fountain of Rams: Ben Mofreg was much esteemed by Alhakem for his ability as well as his valour.

* The child of prosperity.

† The name of a suburb of Cordova, but now disused.

Meanwhile the violence and cruelty of Jusuf Ben Amru, who never could distinguish between such acts as merited punishment and such as might be treated with lenity, had much exasperated the minds of the Toledans; and the populace, tumultuously surrounding his house, threw stones against it, and wounded several of his guards. The principal men of the city succeeded in appeasing the multitude, who were on the point of committing great disorders and causing much calamity; but exhorted by the more honourable among the citizens they had dispersed to their homes and returned to obedience. Thereupon the youth Jusuf, who but a short time before had been so filled with terror that he knew not where to hide himself, determined to make a frightful carnage in the town.

But the same noble citizens who had before succeeded in calming the minds of the people being made acquainted with his purpose, soon determined on what was to be done; and surprising his guard they seized their imprudent and incapable Wali, whom they carried as a prisoner to the fortress of Chadaraque, thus avoiding the evil consequences that must have resulted from the rash violence with which he proposed to castigate the populace. They then wrote to the king, making known what they had been compelled to do, first to pacify the irritated people, and next to restrain the extravagant rage of the young Wali.

These letters the king showed to his general Amru, the father of the young Jusuf, commanding him to summon his son to the frontier, seeing that he was unfitted by his inexperienced years for the office of Wali in a town like Toledo, large and full of Christians, who were already sufficiently ill-disposed to endure the yoke of the Mosleman domination. Then Amru, who was no less revengeful than his son, perceiving that the king was not offended by the popular outbreak, and much displeased by this circumstance, resolved to avenge himself on the town; he therefore begged Alhakem to permit that he should himself become the Wali of Toledo, seeing that he, Amru, was well acquainted with the disposition of its people. The king remembering the good services of Amru did not refuse his request; and the new Wali betook himself to his government, sending his son Jusuf to the frontier as commanded by the king.

Having obtained possession of Saragossa, King Alhakem made his entry amidst great demonstrations of joy from the people; he then repaired to the other cities of the frontier, and at Tutela he left Jusuf Ben Amru as Alcaide of that town. He occupied the city of Pampeluna, and descending the banks of the Ebro made himself master of Huesca likewise; after which he visited the frontier of France.

Now the new Alcaide of Tutela, even Jusuf Ben Amru, desiring to approve his valour, made an irruption upon the frontier of Afranc with his people; and falling into an ambuscade was taken prisoner by the enemy: but this misfortune, which befel him in the year 187, being made known to his father, Amru Ben Abdallah took care to provide for his ransom, and he was soon afterwards restored to liberty.

The king then passed on with his host to Tarragona, which he recovered from the hands of the rebel Bahlul. That general was at the head of certain companies of mountaineers, a rude people, but hardy and well accustomed to the fatigues of war; he had many Christians of Gibel Albortat among his bands, a very brave and bold race. Against these troops the king fought several battles with varying fortunes, but at length he met the rebel and his auxiliaries in fair and open field near Tortosa, when Alhakem remained the victor after a stubborn and sanguinary fight. The traitor Bahlul then fell into his hands, and the king commanded that the perfidy of the man should be rewarded by the loss of his head. That victory was gained in the year 188.

In that year the people of Almagreb proclaimed Edris, the son of Edris, their sovereign; he had then attained the age of eleven years and five months, and the most noble tribes of the Albarbares acknowledged him as their lord.

King Alhakem having finally secured the frontiers, returned by Tortosa to Valencia, whence he proceeded by Xativa, Denia, and the Land of Tadmir, to Cordova, where he was received with much gladness. In the year 189 Alhakem sent his envoys to Edris Ben Edris to offer his congratulations on the proclamation of the young Prince, and to effect with him a treaty of alliance against all their enemies of Africa and the East, or against whomsoever might attempt to disturb either sovereign in the possession of his states.

This embassy was composed of 500 Andalusian cavaliers, who were received by the king Edris with much honour; the young man rejoicing greatly in that message, and in the friendship and alliance offered him by the King Alhakem, seeing that very youthful princes are much gratified by the pomp and magnificence of such visits. He received the Andalusians in the city of Velila, Medina Fez not having yet been founded, although it was commenced very soon after that occurrence.

CHAP. XXXIII.—Of the vengeance taken by Amru in Toledo, and of the insurrection in Merida.

Now the Vizier of Toledo, even Amru, had constantly meditated a cruel vengeance against the people of the city, and did but wait a favourable opportunity for carrying his designs into execution. Meanwhile he wearied their patience by his exactions, now for the repair of the walls, now for the fortification of the towers, and anon for the enlargement of the Alcazar.

About this time the king Alhakem sent five thousand men into the east of Spain, and gave the command of those troops to his son Abderahman, then in the fifteenth year of his age. The young Prince passing near Toledo, Amru, desiring to pay court to the son of his sovereign, went forth to meet him, offered him his house, and begged that he would deign to pass the night in the city, a request in which he was supported by all the principal inhabitants of the place. Abderahman accepted the invitation accordingly; he entered Toledo with a select guard of cavalry, and was lodged in the Alcazar. Some writers affirm that Amru communicated his intention to the Prince, persuading him that it was needful to take off many heads in Toledo, which was full of restless, haughty, bold, and implacable foes to the State; men ever disposed to rebellion and ready for revolt: he added, according to these authorities, that the time had now come for putting an end to the designs of these people, and that there was now an appropriate occasion for making an onslaught upon the most dangerous, without incurring the perils of insurrection. The Prince is then reported to have

replied, that it was for Amru to consider well what he proposed, since he, Abderahman, did not desire unnecessarily to make himself hateful to the people.

The Vizier thereupon sent invitations to the principal inhabitants of Toledo, exhorting all to pay their respects to the Prince, and do honour to the festival that night prepared to entertain him. All the nobles of the city assembled in the Alcazar accordingly, but as each entered the palace he was conducted by the guards of Amru to a remote and subterraneous apartment, where he was put to death. In this manner the Vizier took off the heads of four hundred cavaliers, while many others of the Toledan nobility, then in the presence of Abderahman and bearing him company, remained perfectly unconscious of the cruelties practised on that unhappy night. Some have even averred that the number massacred was five thousand, but the first account is that best authenticated.

On the following morning the heads of those hapless victims were exposed to public view, filling the whole city with terror and dismay. A report was even spread through the town to the effect that these slaughters had been committed by order of the king, who had taken that atrocious vengeance for the insurrection made by the people against the son of Amru; but neither father nor son, Jusuf nor Amru, long survived that cruelty. This grievous night of Toledo was in the year 190; three days later the Prince departed with his company for the frontier.

King Alhakem had given the government of Merida to his cousin Esfah; but the latter, dissatisfied with his Vizier, had dismissed him from his office, which he gave to another in whom he had more confidence. But the deposed Vizier was much favoured by the king, and presenting himself in Cordova he made bitter complaints against the Wali Esfah: nor did he cease the discourse commenced until his words had become atrocious calumnies, insomuch that he succeeded in causing Alhakem to conceive suspicions of his cousin's loyalty, and to regret the power and authority so largely confided to him.

Acting on these fatal inspirations, the king at once despatched the deposed vizier to Merida, with orders to dispossess Esfah of his government—nay, to assume himself

the office of Wali in his stead; and although he had never ceased to receive proofs of uprightness, respect, and affection from his cousin, yet Alhakem, yielding to his impetuous and naturally distrustful disposition, thought proper to command that Esfah should immediately depart from the city of Merida. Offended by this unworthy treatment, the Wali replied that he was much surprised to find that the king gave more credit to the false reports of a deposed vizier than he did to his own tried respect and love; he added that a grandson of Abderahman was not to be dismissed like a freed-man or common groom.

This reply rendered Alhakem furious, and he instantly commanded the Wali of his cavalry to take Esfah prisoner; but when the troops arrived at Merida for that purpose, the prince caused the city gates to be closed, and refused them entrance; yet without making any further attempt or resistance. Alhakem, finding that his orders were not obeyed, then departed himself for Merida, resolving to force his way into the city and take a cruel revenge for the affronts offered him.

All the inhabitants of Merida were ready to defend their Wali, and offered to do so to the last; but he, dreading the evils to come upon them, and determined that they should not suffer on his account, had made such dispositions that on his cousin's entering the city at one of the gates, he was prepared to depart from it himself by another. Then the wife of Esfah, called Alkinza, who was the sister of the king, set off herself from Merida: attended by two servants only, she crossed the camp of the besieging force, and when she came to where the pavilion of her brother was fixed, the discreet and beauteous lady threw herself to the earth before him, defending her husband's cause with reasonings so effectual, that the rectitude of Esfah and the wrongs committed by the discarded vizier were rendered equally obvious. The king then embraced his sister, and his anger having become changed to cordial kindness, he accompanied her back to the city; the past was forgiven on both sides, and Alhakem restored Esfah to all his honours, commanding that he should be obeyed in Merida as before. He remained there himself for some time, and great rejoicings were made by the people for that fortunate reconciliation.

CHAP. XXXIV.—OF THE MOVEMENTS EFFECTED BY THE PEOPLE OF AFRANC, THE TRUCE CONCLUDED WITH THEM OF GALLICIA, AND THE CONSPIRACY DISCOVERED IN CORDOVA.

IN the year 190, the people of Afranc, which is France, made numerous irruptions on the frontiers of the Moslemah, who were defeated with great loss on both sides; while the Christians dwelling in the mountains of Gallicia made a truce on the contrary with the Moslemah generals, and accepted the conditions offered by those leaders to their king Anfûs.* Alhakem was meanwhile still at Merida, but he there received letters from his cousin Casim, advising his instant return to the capital, where his presence was much more necessary than at Merida. The king repaired to Cordova therefore with all speed, since he clearly perceived that there were matters of importance in question, and when he arrived his cousin communicated the fact that a conspiracy had for some time been preparing against him. Casim added that he was himself supposed to intend becoming the chief of the conspirators, but that the originator of that plot was Yahye, one of the Xeques of the Mexuar or Council, who was supported by other nobles of almost equal importance. These malcontents believing that the affronts offered to his brother the Wali of Merida must needs have indisposed Casim towards the king, had spoken to him with much obscurity and circumlocution, but yet in such sort as to make it obvious that their purposes were disloyal, and such as to threaten the repose of the kingdom; wherefore, desiring to ascertain the extent of the evil, Casim had encouraged them to open their hearts, when the various difficulties opposing their wishes, and the circumstances calculated to facilitate them, were fully discussed. It then appeared that all were prepared to deprive Alhakem of his throne and life, giving the empire to one of the grandsons of Abderahman in his stead.

Casim added that finding himself master of so momentous a secret, and seeing the conspirators so powerful as well as

* Alphonso.

so numerous, he dared not attempt to dissuade them from their purpose, since they would at once have commenced by assuring themselves of his secresy at the cost of his life: he therefore affected to enter into their views, had acknowledged their devotion to the house of Omeya, and had expressed his wish to obtain a full knowledge of all who were concerned in the conspiracy.

Filled with rage and horror at this intelligence, Alhakem entreated his cousin to continue the dissimulation he had commenced until they should discover every detail of the plot; and Casim promised compliance. A few days after this conversation, Casim received the list he had requested, and in this were found the names of three hundred cavaliers, all of whom were ready to take the life of the king, and the time they had set apart for doing so was at the hour of prayer on the first Juma next succeeding, when they proposed to strike the blow as Alhakem entered the Mosque to make the Azala or prayer. Two days were still to elapse before that thus assigned, and the conspirators felt all the more assured of the success that would attend their enterprise, since they knew Alhakem to be hated by the people for his severities, and for the alliance which he had made with him who called himself King of the Christians in Gallicia; but that night Casim sent the list to his cousin, warning him that the time to defend himself was come, and that he must not neglect to take the needful precautions.

Nor did Alhakem then lose his moments in sleep, and by the diligence of his Walilcoda or President of the Council, Farag Ben Canena of Sidonia, the third watch of the night had not passed before he saw the heads of those three hundred cavaliers ranged along his Alfombras.* The king then commanded that all should be suspended on hooks in the public square, placing ever them the inscription following:—"These were traitors and enemies to their king." But the people looked with horror on that atrocious spectacle, the greater part of them being entirely ignorant of the cause of the slaughter and of the murderous punishment thus inflicted.

* Alfombras; Carpets. The word is here most probably used as a mere figure; unless indeed it may be supposed that the terrible evidences of his security were in fact laid at the feet of Alhakem, as the manners and modes of feeling proper to that day make not unlikely.—Tr.

In this same year, which was 191, the sovereign of Almagreb, Edris Ben Edris, obtained the site on which he founded the city of Fez, purchasing the same from the Zaneta Tribes of Zuaga and Yargos. The price which he paid for it was six hundred Adharames. Of those tribes some were Christians, some Magos,* and other Jews, but very few were Moslemah. The site thus chosen by Edris Ben Edris is situate at the distance of two miles from the river Zebu; it was richly supplied with cool and shady groves, and had moreover a great abundance of pure water.

CHAP. XXXV.—Of the war against the Christians on the frontiers.

At the commencement of the year 192, the Christians of the land of Afranc descended like a tempest on the dominions of the king Alhakem, and with a host which covered the face of the country. They laid siege to Medina Tortosa, and when the news of this beleaguerment reached Cordova, the king despatched his son Abderahman with all the force he could gather to the succour of the place, commanding him to hasten from Saragossa with all speed for that purpose. Similar commands were sent to the Wali of Valencia, and these troops having been conjoined, were led by Prince Abderahman, when, as if that leader had brought victory chained to his banners, he broke and routed the enemy with horrible carnage. The Christians fled, and the fields which they had occupied were left covered with an abundant harvest for the birds and wild beasts. This happened in the year 193, and the prince having instantly returned to Cordova, was received there with acclamations of triumph; but during the two years immediately succeeding that victory, the generals of the frontiers were nevertheless permitted to have no moment of repose, fighting daily with the

* So did the Arabians call those who followed the traditions of the Sabæans, holding Abraham, Elijah, and Elisha to be true Prophets of God, on which account it was that they were tolerated by the professors of Islam. The Magians were of the sect of Zerdust or Zoroaster, so widely extended in Persia.—*Condé.*

Christians on all the four Puertas or Passes of the Giba Albortat, but always in skirmishes and incursions of little importance, and with greatly varying fortunes.

To this there followed a calm not unlike that which is often wont to precede the most fearful tempests, and soon afterwards the Christians dwelling in the mountains to the North of Spain came down from these hills with a great army, when they overran the whole of Lusitania, cutting up the fields, burning the towns, and plundering the houses. The king himself then prepared to take the field, and leaving Cordova with a select body of cavalry composed of the people from Toledo and Merida, he crossed the frontier, and fell upon the Christians, whom he conquered with his usual good fortune. Alhakem did not return to his capital until after the lapse of two years, having first visited the cities of Lusitania and the frontiers of Gallicia; which done, and feeling somewhat exhausted with the prolonged fatigues of that mountain war, he regained Cordova in the year 196.

In the following year the Christians defeated Alhakem's general, Abdallah Ben Malehi, whom they attacked on the frontier of Gallicia, where the Moslemah suffered a cruel slaughter. The brave General Abdallah died fighting as a good soldier, but his cavalry fled in disorder, carrying terror and dismay into that part of the host which was led by the General Abdelkerim, and which was also routed, in despite of the valour displayed by their leader: nay, so fatal was the confusion of the flight, that many of the troops were destroyed by each other; many more were drowned in crossing the river, upon whose banks they had rushed in tumultuous disorder, and where, falling one over another, they thus miserably died. Some few of those unhappy bands, in the hope of finding shelter within the thick woods, had climbed the trees and concealed themselves in the branches; but being discovered, they were made marks for the Christian cross-bowmen, who shot them down as in sport, and made a jest of their miserable fate.

It is related by Iza Ben Ahmed El Razi, that after this defeat the two armies remained for three days in fear of each other, without either Christians or Moslemah venturing to proceed to battle; but that in one of the sanguinary skirmishes that ensued, Abdelkerim was wounded by the

thrust of a lance, and died two days afterwards. This General was the commander of the troops belonging to Cordova; he had acquired great riches, not only in war but also in the governments which he had held, having been at various times Wali of Tutila, of Huesca, and of Saragossa; but on this frontier he was not so well known as in the East of Spain.

In the year 197 Prince Abderahman returned to the frontiers of France, making an incursion upon Gerona and the Comarcas of Narbonne, whence the troops withdrew laden with vast riches, and carrying with them innumerable flocks of captives of all kinds. After having devastated those provinces, and awaited the passing of the winter and the rains, the prince then crossed the frontier of Gallicia; but in the spring of the following year he fell upon the Christians in Medina Zamora, driving them thence, and occupying many other fortresses also by force of arms. Meeting the Christian troops on the shores of a river, he there defeated them with so great a slaughter that their bodies covered the fields for a vast space, and the streams could not carry off the number of corpses thrown into them. After this triumph Abderahman agreed to make a truce with the Christians of Gallicia and Afranc; which done, he returned to Cordova with many captives and much spoil.

At the commencement of the year 198, there was some commotion in certain towns of Cora and the region of Moror, where the people rose against their Alcaides; but these disquietudes were suppressed in a short time, and the machinations of the seditious leaders being restrained, the heads of those who were chiefs among them were sent to Cordova. In the land of Tadmir, there died, either at the end of this year or the beginning of the next, the Cadi of that country, Fadlo Ben Amira Ben Raxia El Caneni of Ateca, a man long renowned for nobility and excellence, who was also called Abu Alafia. He was much esteemed by the king Alhakem, who greatly deplored his loss. Fadlo Ben Amira had a son of the same name, and he, being the heir of his father's virtues, integrity, and learning, as well as of his possessions, the king conferred on him the same office, and made him Cadi of Tadmir.

In the year 199 there also died in Cordova that Ziyad

Ben Lahmi, known as El Sabton. He was the first Alfaqui or Priest who had taught the doctrines of Malec Ben Anas in Spain, seeing that before his time the Doctors of that country followed those taught by the sect of the Auzei. But authorities are not well agreed respecting the period of his death, since many affirm that he died in 195, while others maintain that he lived until the year 204. He received numerous offers of various dignities and offices, as for example that of Cadi, but he would not accept any, and was a man of a very laudable as well as retired life. In this same year of 199, died likewise the Cadi of Cadies of Cordova, Faraz Ben Canena Ben Nosar El Sidoni, or of Sidonia, whose zeal and love of justice caused his death to be deeply mourned.

CHAP. XXXVI.—OF THE OATH OF ALLEGIANCE TAKEN TO PRINCE ABDERAHMAN, AND THE BATTLE OF THE SUBURB OF CORDOVA.

THE government of the state and its reputation now reposed on the shoulders of Abderahman; wherefore the king his father, having assembled the principal Walies, Viziers, Alcaides, Secretaries, and Councillors, declared him Wali Alahdi, or future successor to the throne. The first who took the oath of allegiance were the Princes Esfah and Casim, cousins to the king; after whom came the Hagib and the Cadi of Cadies, they being followed by the other Walies and Councillors. The day was a very solemn and impressive one, and the ceremonies were conducted with great pomp.

There was now no war, save only that against the Christians, and this solely for the maintenance of the frontier, not from the desire of conquest or a wish to extend the limits of the kingdom, still less with the hope of drawing any great riches from those countries, seeing that the Christians were for the most part a people of the mountains—poor, unacquainted with commerce, and knowing nothing of the nobler arts. In the year 202 the ships of Spain made an expedition to the islands of Iebisa,* Majorca, and Sardinia.

Thus, finding that he had peace both within the kingdom and without, the king Alhakem but rarely left his Alcazar, diverting himself in his gardens with his slaves, male and

* Ivia.

female, among the latter of whom were many who sang well, and were very dexterous in playing on various instruments. Nay, Alhakem seemed now to remember that he was king, only at such times as he desired to satisfy a certain thirst for blood, which he appears to have had from his birth: but these occasions recurred but too frequently, since few days passed wherein he did not pronounce sentence of death, which he at length inflicted for every species of crime. The king had a life-guard of 5000 men, 3000 of whom were Andalusian Muzarabes, and the other 2000 Sclavonians; he had beside a large number of Eunuchs in his palace. To his life-guard he assigned a fixed sum as their pay, and to procure that sum he laid a new tax on the import of certain articles of merchandise; for bringing them, that is, into the gates of Cordova. There were at first certain rebellious persons who refused to pay this new and extraordinary demand, and they maltreated the collectors; ten merchants of their number were therefore cast into prison: but this caused great dissatisfaction and disquietude about the gates of the city; not that the people complained loudly,—there did but rise a vague murmur respecting the new imposts, and of displeasure at the want of confidence in his subjects, which Alhakem made manifest by that large guard with which he now filled his palace, a thing that had not been done either by his father or grandfather, and which yet they observed proved insufficient to keep him free from the daily fear of new treasons and conspiracies.

The king was not unacquainted with these discourses, and he knew also that with the populace of a city there is no medium to be maintained; if the people be not rendered anxious for their own safety, they seek to impose fear on others, and when they do not dread their master may well be dreaded by him. At a word, when the people are once well inspired with fear, you may handle them at your pleasure, and may govern and castigate them without peril, but they must on no account be offered any occasion of enfranchisement by an inopportune gentleness.

Such were the convictions of Alhakem;* when, therefore,

* And they are rendered with the most scrupulous fidelity by the Translator, to the end that all may see how true it is that "there is nothing new under the sun:" witness many a groaning city of our own day that need not now be named.

he was informed of the resistance to his orders which had been attempted by the ten merchants before mentioned, he, being of his nature disposed to rigorous measures, commanded that they should be impaled or nailed to high poles.

It thus happened that on an unhappy Wednesday in the Moon of Ramazan of the year 202, and on the 13th of that moon,* a great concourse of people from the southern suburb of Cordova had assembled in the public square to be present at the execution of the ten delinquents, when a soldier of the guard happened to wound one of the country-people. The bystanders then fell upon the soldier with loud outcries, and driving him from the place with stones, they compelled him to take shelter in the city guard-house, where he arrived wounded and bleeding, with the infuriated multitude at his heels. Once aroused, the rage of the assembled crowds then passed all bounds; the peasants attacked the guards who sought to restrain their violence, and cut several of them to pieces with their knives: the tumult at length extended to the gates of the Alcazar, before which the unbridled assemblage made halt with bold vociferations and insolent threats.

Informed of what was taking place, the king himself went forth in armour, notwithstanding all that his son, the Hagib, and the Alfaqui Jusuf Ben Matruc, could do to prevent him. The Wali Aben Abdelwahid, and other generals who had hastened to the palace, likewise used all their efforts to restrain their sovereign from descending to the courts of the Alcazar; but none could prevail: Alhakem placed himself in front of his cavalry, and riding down the unarmed hordes before him, he drove them, terrified and dismayed, to their suburb.

The greater part of the assembled people then made what haste they could to shut themselves up in their dwellings; but the populace yet remaining in the streets still attempted a vain resistance, and among them the carnage was great: 300 of them were taken alive, and these, being impaled or nailed to stakes, were ranged along the edge of the river. A

* Another annalist gives the 22d as the date of this event, but all agree as to the year.—*Condé.*

frightful spectacle, which extended from the bridge to the last of the oil-mills.

On the Thursday next following this deplorable event, the king sent commands for the total destruction of the offending suburb, commencing with its southern extremity, and for three successive days he permitted the houses and their inhabitants to be given up to the plunder and outrages of the soldiery, who destroyed or possessed themselves of all without humanity, the only restriction laid on them being a command that they should do no injury to the women.

After the lapse of these three days, Alhakem ordered that the unhappy creatures who had been impaled should be taken from their stakes, and all the rest of the dead buried; he then consented to permit the few still remaining alive in the ruined suburb to escape with their lives, but on condition that they should instantly leave Cordova. The unhappy creatures were thus compelled to abandon their beloved homes, and to wander away, despoiled and miserable vagabonds, many departing to the villages and Comarcas of Toledo, while some of them found refuge in that city.

No long time after this lamentable occurrence, more than 15,000 of the Andalusian Moslemah passed over into Barbary; 8,000 of the number remaining in the West of Africa, while the remainder proceeded into Egypt.

Those who had continued their march eastward came at length to Alexandria, which they did in the reign of Abdallah Almamun, son of Raxid. The inhabitants of the city made a vigorous resistance, and did their utmost to oppose the entrance of these Andalusian wanderers; but the latter, rendered desperate by their many sufferings, and incapable of longer enduring the assaults of their adverse fortune, made good their way by force of arms, and gaining possession of the city, after a terrible slaughter, they made themselves masters thereof, conducting the government of the same for a considerable space of time, at their pleasure. Finally, and when Abdallah Ben Taher had been appointed governor of Alexandria by the Caliph Almamun, an agreement was made with those expatriated Andalusians, to whom an island in the Grecian sea was offered for their future residence, with a large sum of money in mitcales of gold,

on condition that they should evacuate the city of Alexandria; and to that island, in effect, they did eventually proceed, taking ship for the shores of Acretas or Crete, which was then but thinly peopled, and filling it with the exiled natives of Andalusia; who were joined, after a time, by wanderers from different parts of Irak and Egypt.

Edobi relates, that the leader of these banished Andalusians, in all their sorrowful wanderings from their beloved land, was a native of Fohs Albalut, in the neighbourhood of Cordova, Omar Ben Xoaib Abu Hafas namely, called El Goleith, who was their general and guide throughout that period of suffering and difficulty. Said Ben Jonas also records that a body of Andalusians made the conquest of Crete some short time after the year 202; and tells us that their leader and the lord of the island was Omar Ben Xoaib, who bequeathed his authority to his sons. He adds, that these retained possession of the same, and transmitted it to their children, until the time of Abdelaziz Ben Omar Ben Xoaib, when the island was conquered by Armetos, son of Constantine, King of Greece.

The same things are related by Homeidi, citing Muhamad Ben Huzam; who tells us further that the Andalusians thus settling at Crete had twenty ships, with which they infested the neighbouring island and all the Greek seas; cruelly plundering the dwellings of the people wherever their forces touched the strand. He says that being ever tormented with a desire to regain their beloved country, there to enjoy the vast riches they had thus accumulated, their general burnt the fleet. His people then complaining of his obstinacy, and bewailing their sorrowful banishment, he exhorted them to remember all they had suffered in that land of Andalusia, their exile from which they lamented so bitterly, and bade them look round on the rich fields flowing with milk and honey that were now their home.

"Forget the maids of your Andalusian valleys among the beautiful captives that here surround you," said the determined general. "Here you have all that makes life most desirable; and a short time will see a new race spring up around you, to be the solace of your age."

These exhortations prevailed. The exiles settled themselves first in Suda, but eventually founded the city of

Candax, at the eastern extremity of the island. "Such was the lot," concludes Homeidi, "of the banished men that went forth from Cordova."

More than twenty thousand of the inhabitants of his capital were destroyed or driven thence by the unbridled rage and ill-considered severities of the King Alhakem; and this sensible diminution was made among the most vigorous and useful dwellers in Cordova. He thereby gave a new population of eight thousand families to the city of Fez; and the King Edris assigned them that portion of his new town which was ultimately called the Quarter of the Andalusians, because by them it had been first peopled.

But Alhakem was not content even with the total destruction of the suburb that had offended him; after having razed and effaced it utterly, he laid a solemn command on his son, and all following successors, to the effect that it should never again be suffered to rise from its ruins, declaring that the place should be a field of desolation, and never know a dwelling, while the race of Alhakem should endure. For this occurrence, and the destruction he had here effected, the king was called Alhakem Alrabdi, or the Man of the Suburb; while for his hard and ferocious disposition he received the by-name of Abu El Aasi.*

CHAP. XXXVII.—Of the war on the frontiers, the war at sea, and the death of Alhakem.

In the year 203, and in that which followed, Abderahman passed the frontier into Gallicia, and made incursions on that country with the people of Merida. Many skirmishes were fought between his troops and the Christians, who were in each case defeated; but the actions were of very little importance. Thence the prince departed to the frontiers of France, where he put an end to the incursions and irruptions which the people of that country were constantly attempting; but in the year 205 he was compelled to return to Cordova, his father having no other minister of state or of war but himself.

* The Father of Cruelty.

On his way to the capital, Abderahman made halt at Tarragona, whence he dispatched certain ships from the navy of Spain to attack the island of Sardinia, where the Moslemah fought with the Christians, burnt their fleet, which lay before that island, and taking eight of their ships, returned to the coast of Spain.

Now Aben Hayan relates, on the authority of Abi Becri Ben Alcutia, that after the cruel slaughter and destruction which King Alhakem had made in the southern suburbs of his capital, he was tormented by an incurable melancholy and heaviness of soul. He lost his colour; became weak and emaciated; was often seized with an access of fever in the midst of that unconquerable sadness, and would then declare that the carnage above described was again acting before his eyes. He saw the miserable people struggling with their armed assassins; he heard the clash and tumult of the arms,—the cries of the combatants and the moans of the wounded, with the groans, mingled with piteous sighs, of those who were dying; no detail, however slight, escaped him; and when passing alone through the halls and along the terraces of his magnificent palace, such was the spectacle that he had constantly before his eyes,—such were the sounds that now replaced the voice of music, and rang in the ears of the king.

Frequently would he summon his servants and the ladies of his household to bear him company at the most unwonted hours of the night; and if, they being asleep when thus summoned, their appearance was in the slightest degree delayed, he would fall into fits of ungovernable fury.

We find it related, that on a certain night he called to one of his attendants named Jacinto, whose office it was to rub delicately perfumed oils into the long and ample beard of his lord. But Jacinto, not supposing that the call was for him, remained for a short time waiting, when the king vociferated his name with all his force, adding at the same time: "What fiend has got thee, thou son of idleness!"

Jacinto then rushing in terror to his master's feet, the monarch snatched from his hand the vase of rich perfume which he bore, and dashed it to pieces on his head.

Then the servant, with much humility, ventured to say: "Alas, my lord, what an hour of night is this for the

anointing of beards!" To which Alhakem replied: "Have thou no care for that, Jacinto; there will never be lack of oil for our beards, either for thee or me, in however rich a profusion thou mayest use it, and to that end it is that I have cut off so many heads."

The king would frequently summon his Cadies and the Viziers of the court, as if he were about to treat with them concerning affairs of the utmost importance; but this he would do at the most untimely hours, and often at midnight. When all were assembled with great solemnity, Alhakem would send for his female slaves, whom he would then command to sing and play on their instruments; which done, he would dismiss the Cadies and councillors, as if it had been for that purpose alone that they had been summoned. He would also not unfrequently convoke the Xeques and generals, assembling troops and distributing arms and horses among them, as if for an expedition; but when all was prepared, he would disband them at once, and dismiss all to their homes.

In this his state of melancholy and suffering, the King Alhakem Ben Hixem composed numerous verses, many of which are songs full of vivid images, and well merit to be preserved; for which cause Abu Ben Nasih, the prefect of the musicians to Abderahman his son, would often sing these stanzas to that sovereign. Among other verses by Alkahem may be cited the following, which do no discredit to his talents and ability:—

"The sword! the mighty sword!
Its power can raise the lowly vales,
And heap them to the skies.
The sword! the flashing sword!
The mountain top I boldly mount:
My blade doth bring it low!*

"Go ask the distant bounds
Of my broad realm, if on one point the foe
Dare wave his steel. Ask if a glance be seen,
Save the bright sunbeam on the peaceful brook:
Ask if a sound disturb the listening ear,

* The King, according to Condé, here alludes to the insurrections of his people, which he had so frequently suppressed.

Save the soft murmurings of the fair cascade,
Dancing the rocks adown, and stealing soft,
To feed the pure green cress that springs beneath.

Go ask my bounds! Yea, ask!
Whose is the hero-name that thou shalt hear?
Whose lance first quivered in the foeman's heart?
First—ever first; the lightning beam of battle!
Whose hand sustained the youth, when horrent war
Blanched the young cheek and dimmed the untaught eye,
That might have turned its gaze. Whose but mine own?
I—I sustained my people,—I upheld them—
I sheltered all. I saved from shameful terrors.
But where my hand was not, came fear and shame;
The coward's flight, and soon the coward's death.

"The cup! the cup of slaughter!
I gave it to the foeman's lip; and shunned not
Myself to drain the crimson draught; but now
Mine arm falls nerveless; yet not mine the blame.
No fault is mine for that, my battles done,
I see your deeds of glory and admire,
But seek no more to share.

At the end of the year 206, the melancholy and fever of the king greatly increased; and after much suffering, he died, in deep repentance for his cruelty. The hour of his departure was that between the prayer of dawn and the orison of the perfect day; or, as some authors have it, between the noonday prayer and that of evening. The day was Thursday; and it was four days before the close of the Moon Dylhagia, when Alhakem had passed a sufficiently unquiet reign of twenty-six years and ten months. Praised be Him whose empire is eternal and without changes!

CHAP. XXXVIII.—Of the reign of Abderahman ben Alhakem, and the insurrection of his grand uncle Abdallah.

On that same Thursday in the Moon Dylhagia, when the King Alhakem passed to the mercy of God, his body was interred with solemn pomp, and Abderahman his son was proclaimed King in Cordova. Abderahman was then thirty-one years, three months, and six days old. The mother who bore him was called Halewa. Tall, handsome,

and of very gentle disposition, the new king had received the name of Almudafar for the bravery and fidelity with which he had defended and maintained his father's frontiers, vanquishing the enemy and subduing the rebel. Enduring and firm in war, Abderahman had not shrunk from the fatiguing contest with the mountain dwellers in the wild Sierras, a rude and ferocious people, hard to overcome, but humane and benignant in peace. This king was the father of the poor; and to his other excellent qualities he added the advantage of much learning. He wrote with elegant erudition, and composed verses with all the precision of which the metrical science is capable. A clear brown complexion lent additional energy to his face; his richly perfumed beard was long, full, and handsome. This monarch completed the glory of the Mosleman empire in Spain, eclipsing all his predecessors in magnificence and greatness of mind. Abderahman increased the Royal Life Guard by 1000 African Horse; and took great pleasure in seeing the arms and horses of this body exhibit the highest dedree of perfection.

When Abdallah, the son of Abderahman Ben Moavia, was informed in Tangiers that his nephew Alhakem had departed from life, it soon appeared that the snows of age had not wholly extinguished the fires of ambition in his heart. Vainly confiding in the help of his sons, he passed the Strait with a considerable force, causing himself to be proclaimed King of Spain in his camp and in such of the towns as had no means of resisting the entrance of his people.

The King Abderahman, informed of this movement on the part of his uncle, proceeded with his cavalry to meet him, and having defeated the forces of Abdallah in several encounters, compelled them to retire by the Land of Tadmir to Valencia, in which city, after repeated skirmishes, in all of which he had but evil fortune, the old man was compelled to shut himself up. Abderahman then sat down before the city, determined to put an end to the commotion thus excited before he should raise the siege.

The two sons of Abdallah now arrived at the royal camp to intercede for their father with the king, and furthermore intending to persuade the former into making reasonable conditions with his justly-offended sovereign. The natural

clemency and generosity of Abderahman rendered their task an easy one, so far as he was concerned, nor did the mercy of heaven fail to assist their good intentions as regarded their father.

Now Abdallah had made all arrangements for a sortie with his troops against those of Cordova; and on a certain Thursday he had spoken to his people, saying, "To-morrow, friends and companions, we will make our prayer of Juma, and, if it be the will of God, we will go forth on the Saturday with the blessing of Allah, and defend our cause against the foe, if God shall so please." The Juma having come, and his people being assembled before the Mosque of Bab Tadmir or Gate of Murcia, Abdallah made them an oration, at the close of which were these words: "Oh, ye noble companies of brave warriors, may God be merciful to you! I believe that we ought now to ask for His divine goodness, that He should teach us the way we ought to go and the part we ought to take, having no other desire than that of conforming ourselves to His divine will. I hope from His mercy that He will show us and make us understand what is most suitable for us to do." The aged Prince then raised his hands and eyes to heaven, and said, "Oh God, the Lord Allah! if my demand be just and good, if I have a better right than hath the grandson of my father to the throne of our country, do thou aid and give me victory over him; but if his right to the empire have a better foundation than hath the claim of thy servant now before Thee, bless him in that right, and do not permit the horrors and misfortunes of the war now between us to continue; support his power and state with Thy hand, and let his cause triumph."

To this all those of Abdallah's host, and many of the inhabitants of the city who were then present, replied, "So be it."

At that moment there rose a very cold and icy wind, a thing altogether unknown in those climates, which caused a sudden accident whereby Abdallah was cast to the earth and remained speechless, in such sort that they bore him to the palace, and the prayer was finished without him. After remaining without the power of speech for several days, the tongue of Abdallah was loosened by the hand of God, and he spake as follows:—"God hath concluded this affair, and hath not permitted me further to proceed with an under-

taking which is contrary to His divine will." He then dispatched a Vizier to the camp to summon the Princes Esfah and Casim to his presence; he wrote letters at the same time to King Abderahman, offering his allegiance with entire willingness of heart. Immediately afterwards he caused the gates of the city to be thrown open for the entrance of the king.

The Vizier having delivered his letters to the sons of Abdallah and to the king, the former, first requiring permission from their sovereign, repaired to the city; but when the Vizier of Abdallah had announced their approach to his master, that prince came forth with all his most important officers, and having met his sons, the whole cavalcade then turned back and rode together to the pavilion of King Abderahman,—the venerable old man riding between his sons, and followed by all his train.

Arrived at the king's tent, Esfah dismounted to hold the bridle of his father's horse, while Casim placed himself at his stirrup, and thus aiding him to dismount, they then led him to the presence of Abderahman, whose hand Abdallah proceeded to kiss in token of subjection: but the king received him in his arms, treating his ancient relative with great affection, and showing him all possible honour. Uninterrupted peace reigned between them from that time, Abderahman conferring on his uncle the government of Tadmir for his life; and there the old man lived until the year 208, when he departed to the mercy of Allah.

Of the people who had accompanied Abdallah from Africa, one part settled in his new government of Tadmir, and the other returned to Tangiers. The death of Prince Abdallah took place exactly two years after the events above related.

CHAP. XXXIX.—Of the expedition of the king Abderahman ben Alhakem to Barcelona.

Delivered from the cares of internal war, Abderahman repaired to the frontiers of Eastern Spain, and prepared to lay siege to Barcelona, which had been occupied by the people of France. The vanguard of the King's army was commanded by the General Aben Abdelkerim, who had

attacked the Christians before the commencement of the siege, and, having beaten them, had shut them up, in the city, wherein they had been compelled to seek a refuge.

After the arrival of Abderahman at the siege, many furious combats were fought, and the Moslemah having made themselves masters of the walls, entered the city, sword in hand, when the Christians fled, and the cavalry of the king made a fearful carnage among them. Abderahman, being then master of the place, commanded that the walls should be repaired, and that done, he proceeded to Urgel, which was also held by the Christians. The same good fortune attended him there, as well as in other towns which the enemy had occupied, the Christian troops flying to their fortresses constructed among the mountains, and to the narrow passes of those Sierras, in the impassable character of which they placed their best hopes: nor did they fail to find a refuge among the savage defiles, and from the early winter of those high regions, which also aided in their defence. The rebels thus subdued, and all things put in order and security on the frontiers, the king returned to Cordova, where he was received with many demonstrations of joy. This fortunate expedition took place in the year 207.

The following year was that which saw the departure from life of the Ameer Abdallah, son of Abderahman Ben Moavia, who died at Tadmir; and when his sons Esfah and Casim made Abderahman acquainted with his death, the king granted them permission to inherit all his riches. It is even affirmed that on this occasion was established in Spain that law which ordains that the son shall inherit the possessions of his father, while to the wives of the dead were apportioned their dowries, with an aliment suited to their station, and in addition to this a certain portion from the outstanding debts of the departed. It was furthermore determined that the testator might dispose of one-third of his property by his will in favour either of an alien or member of his own family, at his pleasure.

About this time a brilliant embassy sent from Constantina by the King of the Greeks, appeared at Cordova, bringing a large number of beautiful horses, with caparisons of so rich and

gorgeous a kind, that nothing like them had ever before been seen in Spain. The ambassadors were received with much honour, and at their entrance into Cordova, which was a great and magnificent spectacle, the concourse of people was an amazement.

The King Abderahman received and lodged these guests in his Alcazar, where they laid their credentials before him. In these letters the King of Greece begged Abderahman to be his friend and ally against the Caliphs of Bagdad, who were the enemies of both, as being the usurpers of an empire which belonged to the Omeyas. King Abderahman returned a very favourable reply: he accepted the presents which the Greek ambassadors brought him from their sovereign; and on their departure he sent with them the Wali Yahye Ben Hakem, known also by the name of El Gazali, an officer of great merit and high distinction in the service of the sea: he was also a man of much learning and ability, an elegant writer, and fine composer of verses. Him did Abderahman commission to salute the King of Greece in his name, charging him at the same time with rich presents for that monarch, some of these consisting in beautiful Andalusian horses, valuable swords forged in Spain and decorated with exceedingly rich workmanship; to say nothing of many other precious and costly gifts which need not be more minutely described in this place.

CHAP. XL.—Of the expeditions undertaken to the frontiers, and of the education of the princes, sons of the king.

In the year 209, King Abderahman despatched Oveidala, a son of Abdallah and brother of Esfah and Casim, to the frontier of the Guf or North of Spain, where the Christians had begun to renew their incursions. This Oveidala was Caid of the Suaifes or Captain of the Lancers of the Guard, and to him the king entrusted the maintenance of the frontier in question.

The sons of King Abderahman, Iban and Otman, now began to be distinguished by their application to letters, and by the ability they both displayed; wherefore their

father, who had entrusted the education of both to the Wali of Sidonia, was much rejoiced at their progress. The Wali Muhamad Ben Said El Gamri had indeed devoted himself with extraordinary zeal to the instruction of those young princes, and the extent of their attainments was made manifest in the conferences which they held with the learned men of the time. The king their father, too, frequently delighted himself by listening to these exercises, and by examining the literary compositions of his sons.

In this year the Walies of the frontiers fought many sanguinary battles with the Christians dwelling in the mountains of Afranc, whom they defeated with cruel slaughter in the narrow valleys between the mountains of Albortat. At the battle of Bort Xezar* more particularly, which is the Puerta or pass into the Comarcas of Pampeluna, the Mosleman forces totally routed those of Afranc, and took their generals prisoners; those officers being brought to Cordova with a vast amount of spoil.

Equally fortunate were the Mosleman generals of the northern frontier against Alanfus,† whom they compelled to take refuge in his mountains and fortresses. The Wali Oveidala returned to Cordova with much spoil and many captives, when he was received by the king with a degree of favour commensurate to the importance of the expedition. His arrival in the city took place in the year 210; and when he had reposed for some months, Abderahman sent him a second time to the frontier with a considerable force, one part of which was a select body of cavalry.

About this time the king appointed Amir Ben Amir Ben Koleib Ben Thalaba El Gezami to be Wali of Toledo; but he was subsequently superseded by his brother Abdallah Ben Koleib, previously Wali of Merida.

Abderahman this year commanded the commencement of several important works in Cordova, as for example the construction of beautiful mosques, wherein he placed foun-

* The Arabian writers mention four Puertas or principal passes into the Pyrenees,—Bort Oxmara, Bort Jaca, Bort Xezar, and Bort Bayona: that of Xezar may be translated "the bent or contorted," and is the Pass of Roucesvalles.—*Condé.*

† Alphonso.

tains formed of marble and various kinds of jaspers. He likewise caused pure water to be brought to the city from the mountains, conveying the same through tubes of lead: with this water he filled the fountains above named. He also constructed public baths of great utility, with vast troughs of stone for the use of the cattle, and watering-places for horses also. He built Alcazars or palaces in the principal cities of Spain, repaired the roads, and constructed embankments along the river of Cordova. The king likewise endowed Madrisas or schools in numerous cities, and in the Madrisa attached to the Aljama of Cordova he maintained three hundred orphan boys.]

In those hours which Abderahman could abstract from the more weighty and important matters of his kingdom, it was his pleasure to converse with the wisest and most learned men of his court, of whom there were many. Among these he much esteemed and distinguished the renowned poet Abdallah Aben Xamir and Yahye Ben Hakem, known also as El Gazali. The latter had been much among the Christians of Afranc, and had also travelled in Greece, where he had been employed in various embassies; the king therefore delighted greatly in conversing with him on the subject of his travels, and informed himself with much interest respecting the manners and customs of the Infidel kings, as well as of all things concerning the cities and people visited by the learned Yahye.

Abderahman had made the Wali of Sidonia, Aben Gamri, his Hagib; and with this renowned general it was one of his greatest pleasures to play chess, Aben Gamri being one of the most accomplished players of that time. At this game the king and his great officer played for valuable stakes of very precious jewels. Very generous and open-handed, Abderahman spent enormous sums on his female slaves, being accustomed to present them with the most costly gems on very light occasions. Ibrahim El Catib relates that the king one day presented a chain or necklace of gold adorned with pearls and precious stones to a beautiful girl who was one of his slaves, and that certain nobles much in his confidence, who were present at the time, could not help allowing him to see that they thought the gift too important a one, remarking that it was a jewel rich enough to ennoble

a royal treasury, and might be useful in some change of fortune. The worth of that necklace or collar was indeed more than 10,000 dinars or doubloons of gold.

To this Abderahman replied, "It appears to me that the glitter of this ornament hath dazzled your eyes, and your judgment is disturbed by that imaginary value which men give to these stones and to the form and purity of these pearls; but what are they, that the best of them should be compared with the beauty and grace of the human pearl that God hath formed with His hand? Doth not the splendour of that last treasure rejoice the eyes of him who beholds it, while it enchants and troubles the heart? The most exquisite pearls, such as you there behold, the rarest emeralds and most precious jacinths, do not charm the eyes, nor solace the ears, nor touch the heart, nor delight the soul, as doth the breathing jewel before us: and thus it seems to me that God hath placed these things in my hands to the end that I may assign them their true destiny, and that so they shall serve to adorn this fair girl."

All then admitted the truth of the king's reasonings; the old men to please their sovereign, and the young because they had been more than half convinced by their nature. The king was afterwards relating his conversation with the councillors, as above cited, to his household friend, the poet Abdallah Xamri, whom he asked if he could find anything appropriate to the occasion to recite concerning it; when Xamri replied, "This, my lord, if it please you," and thereupon repeated the following lines:—

Bright is the gold, and fair the pearl;
But brighter, fairer Thou, sweet girl.
Jacinths and emeralds of the mine
Radiant as sun and moon may shine,
But what are all their charms to thine!

The Maker's stores have beauties rare,
But none that can with thee compare.
O Pearl, that God's own hand hath made;
Earth, sky, and sea,
Compared with thee,
See all their splendours sink in shade.

These verses pleased Abderahman greatly, and as he also

composed such with facility and metrical precision, he replied as follows:—

Xamri, fair gifts of song are thine;
Bright gleams thy thought along the line.
As night's dark shadows shun the day,
So shuns pale care thy cheering lay.
It charms the ear, thy dulcet tone,
And soon hath made the heart thine own.

Thus, too, the beauty God hath given
To her, the fairest 'neath his heaven,
Doth all the sentient being warm,
The eyes enchant, the bosom charm.

More joys than jasmine fair, or rose,
Doth she, the maid I love, disclose.
And if this heart, with these mine eyes,
Were mine to give, they were her prize—
To string them on the band of gold
That doth her snow-bright neck enfold.

Hearing these lines, Xamri exclaimed to the king, "By heaven! thy verses are much more ingenious than mine, and the eulogy thou hast uttered is the best thing that I could desire; wherefore there remains for me only to pray God that he will preserve thee, and give me time and days that I may employ them in thy well-merited praises.

Abderahman then commanded that a Bidra—which is a purse of ten thousand Adarhames—should be given to the poet, who divided the whole among such of his friends as were present. Obeidala Ben Carloman, one of the pages, and a favourite servant of the king, who was in the apartment at the time, also wrote some eloquent verses on his return to his home, and in them he celebrated the liberality of the monarch.

About this time Yahye Ben Yahye El Laiti returned to Spain from his travels in the East. He is called by Malec Ben Anas, the Prudent Andalusian and the Learning of Algarve. Authors relate of this Yahye that he was once listening with many other disciples to the wise Malec, who was seated in the chair of the teacher, when it chanced that an elephant passed before the place of learning, and all the young men rushed forth to behold the animal. Yahye alone

remained with Malec, who said to him, "Wherefore dost not thou also go forth, seeing that thou wilt not often find elephants in Spain?" "I have not come to the East from a far land to look at elephants," replied Yahye, "but to listen to thy words and to profit by thy wisdom;" and his reply surprised Malec as well as pleased him. Yahye was indeed so zealous a disciple of that great doctor that he made two journeys to the East for the purpose of visiting him, and was there at the time of Malec's death, when he accompanied the remains of his honoured master to the tomb.

To this learned man it was that Abderahman entrusted the education of his son Jacûb, who was afterwards called Abu Cosa, as he did that of his son Bixar, both of whom profited greatly by the instructions of their preceptor, and became very learned men. Jacûb, in particular, was much distinguished for the elegance of his poetical compositions, some examples of which are preserved in that collection of Ahmed Ben Ferag called "The Gardens." Bixar, also, was very learned, and possessed an extraordinary degree of eloquence, insomuch that his father would frequently charge him with the office of pronouncing the funeral oration over those members of his family or other great personages who died at the period in question.

Now, on his final return from the East, Yahye Ben Yahye El Laiti more than once held discourse with the king in relation to the high merits and renown which distinguished Aby Ben Zeriab, an accomplished musician of Irak; wherefore Abderahman sent messengers to the East, inviting that master to the Court of Spain, with the offer of great liberalities and many privileges. After some time these envoys succeeded in prevailing on the accomplished Ben Zeriab to accompany them, when the king took him into his palace; and this learned person taught disciples in Cordova, many of whom equalled the most renowned musicians of the East.

CHAP. XLI.—Of various events which ensued about this time, and of a commotion among the people in Merida.

In the year 212 there died at Toledo the very learned Alfaqui Isa Ben Dinar El Gafeki, who was a native of that

city. Isa had been a disciple of Malec Ben Anas. He was a man beloved by all,—friendly in manner, admirable in conversation, and upright of life: such as were taught by Isa Ben Dinar acquired their learning with delight. He was in the habit of practising some few observances that were considered extraordinary: he made, for example, the prayer of the dawn with the preparations and ablutions proper to that of the evening twilight. The funeral ceremonies of Isa Ben Dinar were attended by all the most illustrious personages of the city. In the same year there also died at Toledo the Cadi Sabaton Ben Abdallah El Ansari: he was Cadi Mayor of his Aljama, and was a man much esteemed for wisdom and rectitude.

About this time the king Abderahman sent troops to the frontiers of France, and gave the command of that force to Muhamed Ben Abdelsalem, who had been vizier to the king Alhakem his father. But when Abderahman himself was also preparing to depart for the field, an unexpected revolt of the people of Merida caused his purpose to be suspended. The cause of this disorder was found to be the excessive rigour with which the viziers of the Walies of that Captaincy had exacted the revenues proceeding from the Azaque,* or

* The "Azaque" is the payment made by the subject to God and the king for the purpose of obtaining security for the increase of his remaining wealth. It consists in the tithe of the crops and of the increase of the flocks, as well as that of all products of commerce and industry, the benefit of mines, and the discovery of treasures; the mode of payment varying in different places. The fifth part, and not the tenth only, of treasures discovered, was in some cases due to the king. No tithe was paid for such gold, silver, or precious stones as were employed in the decoration of swords and books, or for the making of rings, bracelets, ear-rings, and other ornaments for the use of women and female slaves. The same substances were also exempt when used for the caparisons of war-horses. The revenues of the Azaque are considered to be the needful contributions of the people for the maintenance of the king and his ministers, the defence of the country, the expenses of war, and the construction and repair of public works,—such as mosques, baths, fountains, and schools, with the support of the Teachers; the making of bridges, roads, Posadas, or houses of refuge for travellers, the redemption of captives, and the relief of the poor who were followers of the Law,—of such, that is to say, as complete their five Azalas or prayers daily; seeing that he who does not fulfil this rule and does not pay his Azaque is not to be treated as a believer, nor, according to the doctrine of Azunna, should his corpse receive burial.—Mohtasar Azunna. MS.—*Condé.*

dues legally paid by the subject to the state. This awakened discontent in the inhabitants, whose anger was fomented by seditious men, among whom was conspicuous Mohamed Ben Adelgebir, who had been Mechtiseb, or Receiver of the Revenues, in the time of King Alhakem, but was at that moment out of office.

The populace, ever turbulent, and those disorderly idlers whose lives are passed in seeking opportunities for the commission of evil, now threw off the restrictions of obedience, and in furious crowds attacked the houses of the viziers, destroying them utterly, after having plundered them of every valuable, and tearing the unhappy men themselves to pieces. The tumult increasing every moment, the Wali and his guard could with difficulty protect his family and household from the insolence of the multitude, and were at length compelled to seek their safety by flying the city, the command of which was then assumed by Mohamed, and others of the bolder among the seditious inflamers of the popular mind. These men then distributed arms and clothing amongst the lowest of the people, and, assembling all the bandits and malefactors of the Comarca, they prepared to defend by force of arms the authority thus obtained.

When the grievous intelligence of these events reached Cordova, the troops of Algarbe and Toledo were despatched to the scene of rebellion without delay. The people of Toledo sent the general Abdelruf Ben Abdelsalem El Dilhethi, against whom the rebels of Merida did not dare proceed beyond their walls; meanwhile the royal forces destroyed numerous buildings, counting-houses, and other fabrics belonging to the people, whose gardens they also cut up, and laid waste the fields of the Comarca for some distance around the town. All these things caused the king much grief; he would not consent that his troops should force a way into the city, dreading the calamities that must ensue, and which he well perceived would be increased in proportion as the place was great and rich.

The siege which it became needful to lay to Merida was thus prolonged, and the disorders committed in the place became daily more intolerable to the unfortunate inhabitants.

More than forty thousand men were now raging with unbridled fury about the streets of their unhappy town; most of these miscreants being fully armed, and the peaceful citizen having no security against their rapacious insolence. These bandits considered the houses of the merchants and rich men to be their lawful prey, and their contents they chose to declare the due reward of their valour.

In this deplorable condition the good Moslemah, and even those who, from a vain desire of novelty or other cause, had at first weakly rejoiced in their own downfall, soon began to find the life of peril and suffering they had brought on themselves unendurable, and now sighed for the restoration of order and obedience, those only supports and guarantees of public security. To this end they availed themselves of the services offered by a body of young men belonging to the most honourable families, and who, at the hazard of their lives, were remaining armed among the rebels, in the hope of prevailing on their leaders to return to their allegiance, and take some steps for the prevention of further evils. This was effected accordingly, and it was at length agreed that some of the principal citizens should go forth to the camp of the besiegers with proposals to the general Abdelruf Ben Abdelsalem. These proposals were to be to the effect that, at a certain hour to be agreed on, some of the gates and towers of the town should be given up to the royal troops, who, entering by these, and supported by the more loyally disposed among the defenders, should then sweep the city of the rebels and malefactors.

The plan thus adopted proved successful. Six young men of noble families, availing themselves of the darkness of night, proceeded secretly to the camp; and having penetrated to the presence of Abdelruf, they communicated their purpose: they then agreed with him as to the hour, the signals, and other preliminaries for opening the gates, which it was determined should be done on the following night. Three of the young men then returned to Merida, for the purpose of informing their confederates of the measures taken.

Abdelruf, on his part, gave strict commands to the cavalry whom he had appointed to enter Merida and scour the streets of the city, to the effect that they should injure none but the

rebel hordes opposing them with arms in their hands; directing the infantry to take possession of the walls, towers, and public squares, but on no account to separate from each other or depart from their banners; such being the will of the king, who had enjoined his generals to see that the rebels only were punished.

The night being come, the insurgent hordes remained in unsuspecting stillness until the third watch, when the people of Toledo silently approached the walls. They made the signal agreed on with the young men of Merida, when the gates were opened, and occupied without difficulty by the foot-soldiers. These were soon followed by the cavalry of Algarve, the last-mentioned troops forming in the first great Plazas or squares they entered,—those, namely, that are within the three gates.

At the coming of the day very great was the terror and surprise of the rebels and common people at sight of the royal forces, by whom they were now driven from the streets. Many threw down their arms and took to flight, while disorder and dismay reigned throughout their hordes, scattered bands of which were soon afterwards to be seen hurrying from the place in all directions. In the midst of the confusion the chiefs of the rebellion escaped, and by noon-day the city was delivered from their presence.

About seven hundred of the insurgents remained dead on the streets; but the multitude betook themselves to their hiding-places, either within the town or in the neighbouring villages, and throughout the Comarca. Abdelruf then assured the safety of such as desired the peaceful restoration of order; he permitted the rebel dead to remain unburied for a certain time on the highway; then, having once more restored the place to quietude, he sent intelligence to the king of what had been done. A few days subsequently there arrived a general pardon from Abderahman, with expressions of his regret for the sufferings endured by the honourable inhabitants of Merida. This commotion in their city took place in the year 213.

CHAP. XLII.—Of the sedition and insurrection of the people in Medina Toledo.

The king had scarcely begun to rejoice in the agreeable intelligence he had received respecting Merida, when notices of the most disquieting character were sent him from Toledo. The population of that city was very great, and consisted in no inconsiderable part of Christians and Jews, who were extremely rich. These people, though subjected to, and apparently living peacefully among, the Moslemah, yet, as they abhorred their masters, and rejoiced in all that brought them evil, so were they ever ready to assist in arousing the populace to rebellion, even at their own peril; and thus it chanced at this time. The insurgents soon found a leader to their heart's content. This was a young man named Hixem El Atiki, the son of a wealthy family in Toledo, and who desired to awaken a tumult of the people, in the hope of avenging himself on Aben Mafot Ben Ibrahim, the Vizier of the city, from whom he had received an affront. He had expended much money among the poorer inhabitants, in the purchase of their favour, and had even found means to win over certain Africans of the palace guard. His preparations being thus all made, Hixem El Atiki did but wait a convenient opportunity for commencement.

An unhoped-for occasion brought this to his hands before he had expected it. It chanced on a certain day that a large number of the populace, retained by Hixem, was assembled on the Alcana, or market-place, when one of their number was taken prisoner by the officers of the Wali of the Zoco, or Superintendent of the Market. This event causing some uproar, the populace fell upon the officers, and, although the latter resigned their prisoner, they were nevertheless assailed on all sides by flights of stones, and fled, badly wounded, to the Alcazar, where they sought the aid of the guard; but the Africans of the guard, bribed by Hixem, affected to share their terror, and took to flight, leaving the palace in the hands of the multitude, whose numbers were constantly increasing. Some of the more forward of the ringleaders then entered the Alcazar and

slew such of the guards as, remaining faithful to their duty, made an attempt to oppose them; nor did the citizens generally fail to evince their satisfaction in the destruction of men whom they considered to be the ever-ready instruments of their oppressors.

It chanced that the Wali Aben Mafot was at a country palace without Toledo on that day, and therein was his good fortune made manifest. Receiving intelligence of the revolt in the city, of the deaths that had ensued, and of the occupation of the Alcazar by the multitude, he retired to Calat-Rahba, and sent notice to the king of what was taking place. Abderahman at once gave orders that his son Omeya should set forth with a portion of the cavalry of the guard, and joining those troops to the force gathered by Aben Mafot, should proceed to the castigation of the rebels. In Toledo, meanwhile, the seditious leaders had so far excited the minds of the inhabitants that many agreed in the necessity of defence, and with common accord they chose for their general the young Hixem El Atiki, who desired no higher glory.

His first step was to pass muster of his people, to the boldest, most vigorous, and most zealous of whom he distributed weapons; he also caused banners to be prepared, which he confided to those of his followers who were most distinguished for their popularity or valour. The guard of the city he entrusted to the undisciplined people and those who had no experience in war; himself sallying forth with a select body of troops against Aben Mafot, who had also gathered a certain amount of strength, both horse and foot. These opponents then met on several occasions and combated with various fortunes, the advantages more than once obtained by Hixem El Atiki adding greatly to his pride and much increasing his hopes.

The city of Merida was meanwhile peacefully governed by the Wali Abdelruf, and seemed to be reposing, content in the quiet of obedience, order, and good policy; the Wali relieving the poor, giving occupation to the unemployed, and pursuing the disorderly to their correction or destruction, as the nature of their case might demand. He recommended the most watchful care to the Cadies of the Coras or out-

lying districts, as well as to those of the city, exhorting them to exercise a caution that should prevent the machinations of the disaffected from bringing about new disorders, and warning all to give no just cause for discontent. He placed a strong guard on all the depositories of arms, and made the round of the streets with bodies of cavalry, day and night, placing a permanent guard at all the gates, on the public squares, and in every place of great concourse.

When King Abderahman found that the subjection of Merida was followed up with so much prudence by his Wali Abdelruf Ben Abdelsalem, he directed that officer to proceed to the district of Toledo, in the hope that he might tranquillise the Comarcas of the city, whose people were then only beginning to rise in revolt, and the rebel chiefs of which he was commanded to subdue by every means in his power. But to these orders was added an exhortation from the king to the effect that no injury should be done to the country, which could possibly be avoided; that the royal troops should not be permitted to pursue such as fled, for the purpose of killing them, but only to compel the resignation of their arms; that all who offered this resignation willingly, should be permitted to depart with life, and with no other punishment than that of exile from the land they infested. Abderahman added that thus alone was it fitting that the Mosleman should make war against those of his own creed.

But three entire years elapsed before the generals of the king could obtain any considerable advantage over the rebel troops of Toledo; and it was not until the year 217 that Omeya, the son of Abderahman, could bring them to a pitched battle. At that period he succeeded in getting a body of them into an ambush which he had laid on the banks of the River Alberche, and there he made a fearful slaughter of those misguided men; the few whom God delivered from the swords of the conquerors getting back with much difficulty to the walls of Toledo. Yet the strength of the city, and the impregnable force of its position, enabled the rebellious people to continue in their disobedience. In the year following that event, the troops of the king, led by the Wali Abdelruf, met with those of Toledo in the fields of

Maghazul, when the carnage that ensued was such as to render that place a monument of horror and malediction among the insurgents, seeing that but very few of them escaped from the fatal conflict on that unhappy day.

CHAP. XLIII.—Of the entrance of rebels into Merida.

No long time after the departure of the Wali Abdelruf Ben Abdelsalem from Merida, the disaffected of that city, and those who felt themselves aggrieved by the subjection in which their Wali held them, gave notice of his absence to the bandits and malefactors then infesting the Comarcas of Alisbona,* and who were led by the rebel chief, Mahomed Ben Abdelgebir; when these vagabonds, availing themselves of the weakened state of the town, introduced themselves one by one, or in small companies, and by slow degrees, within the walls. They then assembled their strength, attacked the guards by night, and obtained possession of the gates, after which they likewise seized the magazines of arms and clothing, which they distributed among the refuse of the populace. They next sought with great diligence for the viziers and other officers of the government; and two of those unfortunate men having fallen into their hands, they fastened them to stakes and shot them to death with arrows.

When the king received intelligence of these new disasters, he gave orders to the effect that the Alcaldes of the Comarca should assemble their people with all possible speed and proceed to Merida: Abderahman himself, with the cavalry of his guard and that of the city, also departed from Cordova, determined to repair to the scene of revolt in person; and at Ain Coboxi he was joined by the Alcaldes, each with the people of his Alcadia or jurisdiction. The king then held a review of these troops, when there were found to be one hundred and twenty banners, under which there marched forty thousand men.

Abderahman now made a discourse to his generals, commanding them still to conduct the men as against brothers and followers of the same law; declaring that from the moment when any man turned his bridle and fled, he ceased to be an enemy; that all who submitted were to be treated

* Alisbona: Lisbon.

as sons and brothers, misled by evil counsellors, or, if meriting punishment, not that of death, which was to be inflicted only on the leaders of the rebellion.

Meanwhile the insurgents of Alisbona, and those troops of rebels who had obtained possession of Merida, did not dare to appear beyond the walls of the city, but they defended their gates and towers with ability and resolution, compelling all the inhabitants to take part in their rash and obstinate defence. The king then gave orders for several assaults, which were made accordingly; but the strength of the walls was such that they produced no great effect. With much pains and labour, some of the towers were then undermined, the excavated walls being supported by beams, which having been fired, the towers must of necessity fall. All things were thus disposed for taking the city by storm; but the king, dreading the carnage and suffering of various kinds that must ensue, was still desirous of avoiding the last extremities, and caused arrows to be shot into the city, each bearing a written proclamation to the effect that all should receive a free pardon, provided the leaders named, and who were the chiefs of the rebellion, were delivered over to his justice. Some of these proclamations fell into the hands of the persons thus pointed out, and others into those of their friends; whereupon, believing themselves but little likely to remain long secure from the effect of these invitations, they sought to ensure their safety by flight. This circumstance, with its cause, could not long be concealed, and was no sooner made known to the more honourable among the inhabitants, than they encouraged each other to resign the fate of all to the clemency of the king.

The gates of Merida were consequently thrown open, and Abderahman entered with the cavalry of his guard. He was received with great demonstrations of joy by the citizens, but with infinite grief and terror by the disaffected and insurgents. The principal men of the city excused themselves very humbly for that they had not been able to take the chiefs of the rebellion signalised by the king; but Abderahman reassured them by replying, "I give thanks to God that in this day of rejoicing He has delivered me from the pain of passing sentence upon them, and of commanding their death; it may be that He will

open the eyes of their understanding and cure them of their folly; or if that should not be, then God will give me power to prevent them from once again disturbing the quiet of my people."

Abderahman then dismissed the troops of the Comarcas to their respective provinces, presenting arms, horses, and vestments to the Alcaides and other cavaliers, when all returned to their homes highly satisfied with that expedition. The king himself remained at Merida several days, commanding that the ruined forts should be reconstructed and the walls repaired; although many of his great officers advised him to destroy those defences, to the end that the city might not be emboldened, by the possession of such, to new revolts. Abderahman was nevertheless of a different opinion; he laid his commands on the Amil or Governor of the province, Abdallah Ben Coleib, charging him to employ the poor of the city in those works; and so it was done. The fortifications were restored, and when all were completed, an inscription was placed on one of the principal bastions to the following effect:—

"In the name of God, the Merciful, the Powerful; the blessing of Allah and his protection on the people obedient to God. This fortress and its walls, the Ameer Abderahman, son of Alhakem, whom may God exalt, governing the people obedient to Allah, hath commanded to be constructed by the hand of his Amil, Abdallah Ben Coleib Ben Thalaba, and that of his servant, Giafar Ben Muhasin, Chief of the Builders. The work was completed in the moon of the second Rebie, and the year 220."

In this year, Caraos Ben Abês Ben Mansor El Thekifi died at Cordova; he was one of the most learned of the disciples of Malic Ben Anas, and had ever been highly favoured by the king Abderahman Ben Alhakem.

The war against the rebels of Toledo was meanwhile proceeding as before, they continuing to defend the city with infinite constancy, making frequent sallies against the Walies Abdelruf and Aben Mafot, and sustaining the siege during more than three years. At length the insurgents were reduced to such straits that they had no choice between the two extremities of surrendering the place or dying

of hunger. The rebel Hixem, being wounded, fell into the hands of Abdelruf Ben Abdelsalem, who commanded that his head should be taken off: this was accordingly done, and the head was then suspended on a hook over the gate called Bab Sacra;* but in conformity with the clement commands of the king, a general pardon for every class of citizens was proclaimed immediately afterwards. The entrance of Abdelruf into the city of Toledo took place in the year 223. He at once commanded the repair of the walls, and caused numerous buildings in the suburbs, which had suffered injury during the siege, to be restored to their previous condition; he re-established good order in the city, and for the greater security of the inhabitants constructed gates to close each quarter, so that each one had the means of defending itself against any sudden attack from the others.

The news of the reduction of Toledo were celebrated with much rejoicing in Cordova, and the king confirmed the illustrious Wali Abdelruf Ben Abdelsalem Ben Abi Dilhethi, in the government of the city and province; to Aben Mafot Ben Ibrahim, who was the uncle of Abdelruf, he gave the office of Vizier of his Council of State.

CHAP. XLIV.—OF THE WAR ON THE FRONTIERS, AND OF THAT WAGED BY SEA ON THE COAST OF MARSEILLES.

In the year 224 the King commanded the Wali of Saragossa to assemble the banners of all Eastern Spain, and to direct the march of that force upon the land of France: Obeidala Ben Abdallah and the Wali Aben Abdelkerim then made incursions on those countries during the two following years, the people flying in all directions and abandoning their towns to the Moslemah, who took many captives, and made much spoil of all kinds. About the same time the people of Merida, Badajos, and Lisbon, also made an irruption on the territory of Gallicia, carrying the war into that land against Alanfus,† who was the king of the

* Now corrupted from Bab Sacra, or the Holy Gate, to Bisagra.—*Condé.*

† Alphonso.

rude and warlike people inhabiting the same; against whose bands the Moslemah fought with various fortune.

The ships of Spain likewise departed from her shores that year, on a warlike expedition against Afranc: sailing from the port of Tarragona, they joined those in the islands of Iviça and Majorca, when all fell together on the coasts of France, devastating the Comarcas of Marseilles and taking many captives, with much riches of various kinds, in the neighbourhood of that city itself.

At this time there came messengers to Abderahman from Theophilus, King of the Greeks, entreating assistance in the war which he was compelled to undertake against Almoatesim, Caliph of the East. These envoys were received with much honour; and Abderahman wrote to the king of the Greeks, assuring him that so soon as he could disembarrass himself of the internal dissensions which then occupied his attention he would send ships to his aid. The messengers were then dismissed, with rich presents, and well content.

Now the Christians of the mountains of Afranc, which is France, had extended their irruptions even to Albaida and Calahorra, plundering the towns, burning the villages, and destroying the crops in the fields. These evils were a heavy grief to the king, and he wrote to his Walies of the frontier, commanding them to assemble their forces, since he was determined to conduct that holy war in person.

In the year 227 died the Cadi of Tadmir, Abderahman Ben Fadal El Caneni of Ateka, a man renowned for his integrity; his son, Aben Fadal, was in like manner distinguished for ability and excellence, wherefore Abderahman conferred on him the charge which had been held by his father; and the people of the district thus confided to him returned thanks to the king for that appointment.

CHAP. XLV.—Of the arrival of the Normans on the coasts of Spain.

In the year of the Hegira 229* there came fifty-four ships to the coast of Lisbon, and these vessels disembarked the

* A.D. 843.

Magioges* in the country. These are a fierce and proud people from the ultimate regions of the North; they plundered the towns, and massacred all that fell into their hands with barbarous cruelty, sparing neither women, children, nor old men: nay, even the domestic animals were put to death by those savages. When they could find nothing further to carry away, they burnt or tore down the buildings, cut up the growing crops, and destroying all things, proved themselves the enemies of the whole human race. They remained during thirteen days before the city of Lisbon, devastating the fields and burning the villages for many leagues round The Mosleman leaders then assembled the force of the Comarcas, when the Magioges, taking the prey they had accumulated, embarked and disappeared.

But no long time had elapsed before their ships were again infesting the western coasts of Spain and Africa. They disembarked at Huelba and in Gezira Cadiz, overrunning the whole district even to Sidonia. In the year 230 these barks appeared even at Seville; and on the eighth day of the moon of Muharram, they made an irruption upon the Comarca, plundering and burning as was their wont. Gezira Cabtal they laid in ashes after a combat with the people of that district which lasted three days, and wherein they made an atrocious slaughter: they plundered a suburb of Seville, and fortified themselves in Tablada, but the brave Moslemah of the city defeated them; and on the twelfth of the same moon they retired, knowing that fifteen ships sent by the king, with a body of select troops, were approaching to their encounter.

The Magioges then returned to the west, and King Abderahman sent his orders to Merida, Santarem, and Colymbria, enjoining his commanders and Walies of the sea to guard well the coast entrusted to them. The king himself set forth to defend the cities of Andalusia; and beholding the desolation caused by those barbarians he was grieved to the

* So did the Arabians call the people of the uttermost North, whether of Europe or Asia; meaning "the people of Gog and Magog." In Europe they were known as Northmen or Normans, and, descending from the Baltic and the coasts of Norway, they infested all the coasts of Germany, France, Spain, Italy, and Africa.—*Condé.*

heart, but consoled and reassured his people to the best of his power. The walls and edifices of Seville, which had been seriously injured, he commanded his builders to restore: when such of the citizens of Seville as had fled their homes from fear of those fierce Magioges and had taken refuge in Carmona, returned with better hope to their dwellings.

At this time the king made Muhamad Ben Zeyad Ben Abderahman El Lahmi, Çadi of the Aljama of Cordova: he was a native of that city, was a man of extraordinary learning, and distinguished to an equal degree for the excellence of his life.

Abderahman now gave orders for the construction of ships at Cadiz, in Carthagena, and in Tarragona, for the better security of the coasts, entrusting the care of that matter, with the communications between the sea-board and the interior, to his son Jacûb, called Abu Cosa. He furthermore commanded that to this intent there should be a Sahib El Berid, or Superintendent of Roads, appointed for every Captaincy or military district in Spain, with a certain number of Forênicos or mounted couriers, who might carry forward the advices and orders of the Government with more rapidity than had previously been done.

CHAP. XLVI.—Of the various events next succeeding, of the works of king abderahman, and of his death.

In the year 232 there was a great drought in Spain, and the duration of it was such that the flocks perished for lack of water, seeing that all the ponds and springs were dried up. The vines and other fruit-trees were likewise scorched by that drought, and all the crops of wheat and barley were destroyed. A great plague of locusts also came over from Africa, and there soon remained no green thing in all the land. To save themselves from dying of hunger, the people of Spain fled in vast numbers to Africa; for in Almagreb and all the territory of Fez, the Wisque or load of wheat was sold for three Adirhams.

In the following year, as the scarcity still continued, and the fruits of the earth yet failed, King Abderahman remitted

the tithes and products of various kinds which the people ought to have paid. These calamities prevented the king from undertaking that expedition of the Algihed, or Sacred War, for which he had been making preparation; nay, the fear of new debarkations on the part of the Magioges restrained the enterprise both of Christians and Moslemah, confining the swords of all within their scabbards. To occupy and maintain the poor of his kingdom, Abderahman built mosques and palaces in various cities of Spain: he constructed the Rusafa or embankment along the edge of the river at Cordova, caused water to be brought from the mountains in tubes of lead, and gave orders for the building and erection of numerous fountains in different quarters of the city, with baths of marble, for the greater convenience of the inhabitants. The two palaces of Merdan and Mogueit, with other beautiful edifices of the capital, were likewise restored at that time with very great magnificence by his orders. The king also caused the streets to be paved, and these works were for the most part completed in the year 236.

In the spring of the year 237, Abderahman commanded his Hagib to summon the Walies who were governors of great cities, with the Cadies, the Alcatibes, the Viziers, and Counsellors of State, all of whom assembled in Cordova accordingly. He then declared his son Muhamad to be his successor in the empire; when all present took the oath of fidelity and obedience to that prince without any reserve or exceptions. The remaining sons of the king, with the great Xeques, and other noble chiefs, concurred in that solemnity, and the declaration was held as a festival with many rejoicings. Abderahman gave very splendid feasts to the Walies of the provinces on this occasion, distributing among them rich presents, with arms and horses to his generals, and handsome vestments to his guards. The poor were also succoured and made glad by liberal alms, in all the cities of the kingdom; nay, even the most remote towns and undistinguished villages were called to participate in the joy of the capital and the generosity of the king.

In this year died Casim Ben Hilel El Caisi, a very learned man, and Cadi of Guadil Hijara, which was his native place.

In the moon Safar of the year 238,* the King Abderahman Ben Alhakem fell sick; but although his malady became daily more and more grievous, yet he constantly retained the tranquillity of his soul: his bodily strength had indeed totally departed, but the serenity of his aspect continued unaltered, nor were the mildness and affability of his character disturbed even to the last moment of his life. Having filled the measure of his days, he departed to the mercy of God as the evening twilight of Thursday, the last day of the moon Safar, fell on the earth, and in the year above named.

Abderahman had lived sixty-five years, three months, and three days; and the time of his reign was thirty-one years, three months, and six days: he left forty-five sons, and was accompanied to his grave by all the people of the city and the Comarcas,—the whole land mourning his death as do children that of a good father. His obsequies were celebrated at daybreak on the third day of the moon of the first Rebie; the prayer being made for him by his son.

The King Abderahman caused no change to be effected in the coinage; he made all according to the same rules and in the same form with those used by his predecessors. In his day the fabrication of arms was brought to much perfection in Cordova and Toledo, as were the institutions for the instruction of youth, which were materially increased in number throughout all the towns of the whole kingdom.

CHAP. XLVII.—Of the reign of Muhamad, son of Abderahman.

After the death of Abderahman, the second of that name and the fourth of the kings of the Beni Omeya line in Spain, his son Muhamad, called Abu Abdallah, was proclaimed king in Cordova: he was then at the age of thirty years. The mother who bore him was called Themina. His subjects took the oaths of allegiance on Thursday the sixth day of the moon of Rebie Primera in the year 238; and the people conceived high hopes of prosperity under his reign, seeing that he was distinguished by the most excellent qualities. Justice, humanity, bravery, with great natural ability and

* A.D. 852.

much acquired learning, had been known to adorn Muhamad Ben Abderahman from his youth.

In the first months of this king's reign there arose a literary quarrel or dispute concerning letters, between the Alimes and Alfaquies of the Aljama of Cordova on the one hand, and the Hafit* Abu Abderahman Baqui Ben Machalad on the other. This Andalusian sage had studied in the East under the most renowned Doctors of that time, disciples of Ahmed Ben Muhamed Ben Hanbal. He taught in Cordova according to the tenets laid down in the books of Abu Becri and Abi Xoaiba; the latter an Andalusian doctor of the same school. All the Aljama of Cordova opposed his teaching, and took pains to convince the king that the differences made by the Hafit in his exposition of the Koran were not to be tolerated. They affirmed that the Aljama followed traditions supported by 1,300 Doctors, or very nearly that number, while the Hafit Baqui and those of his school could bring but 284, of which not more than ten were of approved authority and fame.

King Muhamad thereupon commanded the disputing doctors to assemble in his presence; he examined the work of Abi Xoaiba, and heard the exposition of the Hafit Baqui, with all that could be brought against him by his opponents: that done, the king declared that the distinctions made by the Aljama appeared to him nothing better than light subtleties and mere cavils, in no sort affecting the substance of the faith, whether as found in the written Law, or in the Sonna or received Tradition. He added that the expositions of the Hafit conveyed much useful instruction and inculcated very laudable practices, for which cause it would be unjust to impede his teachings, which were well calculated to be useful to the people, more especially when reinforced by the admirable example set them by the Hafit himself, he being a man of most excellent life.

In the Ramazan of this year there died in Cordova the wise Alfaqui, Abdelmelic Ben Habib, an Andalusian, also known as El Salemi, who had studied in all the most renowned Aljamas of the East, and had everywhere acquired

* Hafit was the title given to those learned men who preserved a large number of historical facts and traditions in their memory.—*Condé.*

great fame for his prodigious erudition as well as for the amenity of his character. His works were sought and valued by the learned of all countries. Some place the death of this sage in the following year, and say that he departed on Saturday the twefth of the moon Dylhagia in that year.

Amira Ben Abderahman Ben Marun El Ateki of Tadmir also died in this year: he was celebrated for his great knowledge, and gifts in the composition of verse, and is known also by the name of Abulfadal. His death caused much sorrow, and he was long lamented.

CHAP. XLVIII.—Of the war on the frontiers of Gallicia and in Toledo.

The King Muhamad, inspired by a fervent wish for the extension of Islam, and desiring to propagate the Faith on the frontiers of Spain, where he likewise found it needful to restrain the perpetual aggressions made on the people of the borders by those of Afranc and Gallicia, commanded his Walies of Merida and Saragossa to assemble their forces and direct the march of the troops thus gathered upon those districts.

The Walies set forth accordingly, and on the part of Afranc their incursions had a very fortunate issue. Passing the mountains, they fell upon the Comarcas of Narbonne, whence they took numerous captives, with much riches in flocks and other valuables; the inhabitants flying in all directions before the Moslemah conquerors, or coming forth themselves from their towns to offer them their possessions, in the hope of tempering their rage.

But on the frontier of Gallicia the Moslemah fought with varying fortunes, and the Wali, Muza Ben Zeyad El Gedai, was defeated by the Christians near the Hisn Albedai, the enemy taking that fortress and cutting to pieces the Moslemah troops by whom it was defended. The news of this misfortune soon reached Cordova, and the king was much grieved for the defeat of his general; but his courtiers and the numerous enemies of Muza made use of that occasion to do the unlucky soldier an injury, calumniating him basely by the declaration that he had been led to the loss

of that fortress by gifts presented to him, and by a traitorous compact made with the Christians. The king gave more attention than he should have done to those evil-speakers, and not only deposed Muza Ben Zeyad from his government of Saragossa, but also dismissed his son Lobia Ben Muza, who was Wali of Toledo, from his employment. Offended by that injustice, the two generals did then revolt: confiding in the love felt for them by the people of their provinces, they set on foot a secret intelligence with the Christians, making a truce with those of Gallicia, and seeking to obtain assistance from them; all which arranged, they finally took up arms against their lord.

When these things were made known in Cordova, they caused the king to give more credit to the reports which had before been made to him, and to the suggestions of those who were the enemies of Muza Ben Zeyad; he therefore lost no time in long preparations, but taking with him such troops as were then in Andalusia, set forth himself to punish the rebels. Meanwhile, the King of Gallicia sent a large force in aid of those rebelling in Toledo, which city the insurgents strongly fortified. The army of Andalusia passed the mountains, and King Muhamad, knowing that the rebels, well defended by the strength of their fortifications, would not venture forth to battle with his troops, yet greatly desiring to bring them to an early and decisive action, took certain measures to that effect. He concealed a strong body of his people in a thick wood, and that done, appeared himself with but an insignificant force of horse and foot in the plains of Toledo, making various movements in the sight of the city, as though undecided in his purposes and not knowing where to fix himself; nor indeed did he seat his camp at any point, but gave various evidences of fear and disquietude.

The Wali of Toledo, believing the body he saw to be but the advanced division of a greater force, was anxious to profit by the occasion, and strike a blow that should paralyse the action of the expected army; he came out against the enemy, therefore, with all his troops and auxiliaries; but after some light skirmishing, in which nothing important was done, the royal forces gradually effected their retreat upon Wadacelete, the valley wherein the ambush was laid.

Those of Toledo, eagerly following up their advantage, and determined to bring their opponents to an engagement, fell into the snare that had been prepared for them; and at the point agreed on, the cavalry of King Muhamad, led by himself and by Haxem Ben Abdelaziz, fell upon them in flank and rear. The Toledans, thus taken by surprise, were thrown into confusion, and a fearful carnage ensued among them; the field remained hidden under their corpses, and lay saturated with their blood,—eight thousand Christians and seven thousand of the Moslemah dying there on that fearful day. The few who could succeed in redeeming their lives from the slaughter took refuge in the city, and confiding in the strength of their walls, they would not surrender, although Muhamad offered them pardon and safety if they would resign themselves unconditionally to his mercy.

Seeing that the siege was very likely to prove a long one, the king then returned to Cordova, leaving the troops in command of his son Almondhir, who was then taking his first lessons in arms, and already manifested a strong inclination for the exercises of war. The Viziers of the young prince were the generals Abdelmelic Ben Abdallah Abu Meruan and Aben Abdelaziz. In this expedition against Toledo died Abdelcadir Ben Abi Xoiba of Alcolea, in the territory of Seville, a cavalier of great bravery and distinction.

When the King Muhamad returned to Cordova, he was received with the utmost demonstrations of rejoicing; there was, indeed, no creature left in the city; small and great, all went forth to meet and welcome their sovereign, who made his entrance on that occasion in the year 240. In the following year, the Prince Almondhir having departed with a portion of his army to make an inspection of the fortresses in Talavera, those of Calat-Rahba, Uclis, Huebde, Zorita, and others, the people of Toledo took that opportunity for avenging themselves, and sallying forth on the troops left to maintain the siege, they defeated and dispersed them, making a great slaughter in their ranks, and pursuing them up to the walls of Talavera, wherein they were compelled to seek shelter. This being made known to Prince Almondhir, he set forth at once with the Wali of Talavera, and marched against the rebels, whom he routed

and put to flight, compelling them to return with great loss to their stronghold of Toledo. The prince then sent intelligence of this success to Cordova, dispatching with the same from seven hundred to eight hundred heads, and informing the king his father that those were the heads of seven hundred rebels who had fallen into his hands alive while in the act of flight, and which he had commanded his people to take off. Muhamad then commanded that those trophies should be placed on the turrets of the city walls.

Continuing the siege with increased vigour, the troops of Andalusia cut up the vines and destroyed the gardens which had been wont to flourish admirably in the vicinity of Toledo; and in a fierce attack made on the rebels by Almondhir, a bridge on which vast numbers of them had gathered at the moment, was destroyed, when all around and upon it met their death. Three years did these devastations continue to ravage the country about Medina Toledo, the peaceable inhabitants and poor labourers beholding their houses and fields destroyed, with infinite grief of heart;—their gardens, their pleasant abodes in the country, all that made their riches and their happiness, they now beheld offered as a sacrifice to the obstinacy and rebellion of seditious men, the greater number of whom were Jews, Muzarabes, or bad and faithless Moslemah. In the year 245, King Muhamad himself came to the siege, and when the citizens were made acquainted with his arrival some of their number ventured forth secretly, declaring that if Muhamad would assure them of his pardon, they would either cause the town to be surrendered, or would put the leaders of the rebellion to death in case of their refusal. To this the king agreed, and promised the citizens his pardon on condition that Medina Toledo should be surrendered on a given day; before the arrival of which the gates of the city were in effect thrown open for the entrance of the sovereign, while the heads of certain among the rebel generals were also laid at his feet; others of the number had succeeded in escaping in disguise from the place, or had concealed themselves so well within the city, that they could not be found.

But although the king pardoned the people of Toledo as he had promised, yet he removed all their Viziers and

Cadies, those acting for the Moslemah as well as those for the Christians, appointing men in whom he had the utmost confidence in their place; he likewise made many new ordinances, and commanded that more rigorous measures of police should be adopted, seeing that a too great indulgence and toleration on the part of their sovereigns was found to have made the Toledans rebellious and insolent.

CHAP. XLIX.—Of the return of the Magioges to the coasts of Spain.

While the king Muhamad was thus anxiously occupied in tranquillising his country, and appeasing the dissensions that had arisen within his states, the barbarous Magioges appeared on the coasts of Andalusia with sixty ships. They disembarked in the district of Raya, and made irruptions on Cartama, Malaga, the Raduya, and all the Comarca of Ronda, producing the effect of a devastating tempest wherever they presented themselves.

They did not venture to penetrate far into the interior, but they burnt the towns that lay near the coast, and destroyed in one way or another whatever edifices were found along the shore, more particularly the watch-towers. They also plundered the Mosque of Alhadra, and that called the Mosque of the Banners;* but finding that the cavalry of King Muhamad was approaching, they embarked without delay and passed over to the coasts of Africa.

Having devastated the sea-shores of that country, they returned to pass the winter on those of Spain, after which they sailed for the great ocean, laden with riches of all kinds, and thus happily disappeared for that time from our coasts. This was in the year 246.†

* Xerif Edris tells us that there was a mosque at Alhadra called "Arraryat of the Banners," and situate in the sea-port; he adds, that the name was given it in commemoration of the fact that at the period of the conquest, Taric there assembled his officers for counsel, when the concourse of banners then appearing gave rise to the name.—*Condé.*

† A.D. 860.

Meanwhile the Christian bands were extending their outrages with infinite boldness, and their light cavalry made incursions even to the neighbourhood of Salamanca and Coria, defeating the Wali of that frontier, Zeid Ben Casim, with great and serious loss. This was at once reported at Cordova, when the king commanded his Walies to prepare a body of cavalry and other forces for making an irruption upon Gallicia. Prince Almondhir left the capital in command of the troops then assembled, and having reached the shores of the Douro, he arranged his army in five divisions, the vanguard, two wings, the main-body, and the reserve. This is what they call the "Alchamizes,"* and in that form it was that Almondhir opposed himself to the host of the Christians. The advance was conducted by Muhamad Alcauthir, the main body being commanded by the Prince Almondhir himself, who defeated the Christians with a great slaughter of their troops: pursuing his advantage, he then crossed the Christian border, took possession of the fortresses which had been occupied by those infidels, and penetrating to Pampeluna and the mountains of Afranc, made numberless captives, and acquired a vast amount of spoil.

In this expedition, which took place in the year 247, Prince Almondhir took prisoner a very brave and distinguished Christian named Fortun, whom he caused to journey with him to Cordova, but there gave him his liberty. In that city, therefore, the noble captive continued to live for a very long time, having finally reached the age of one hundred and twenty-six years.

In the year 249 the Christians of Gallicia, with those from the mountains of Afranc, which is France, renewed their incursions, plundering the towns, cutting up the fields, and carrying the Moslemah of the frontiers into captivity. The king therefore commanded the Generals and Walies

* Alchamis signifies the union of five parts, and symbolically a hand. An army is described as "Alchamis" when composed of five parts, which are the Almocadema, the Calb, the Almaimana, the Almaisara, and the Assaca: that is to say, the advance, the centre, the right wing, the left wing, and the rear. So it is that Jusuf Ben Said, of Illora, explains this word, and in our old Arabic authors we find the words Alchamizes and Almafullas used as equivalent to embattled hosts." —*Condé.*

of the provinces to assemble their forces for a Sacred War; and his resolution to undertake that holy work was published from all the Alminbares of Spain: whereupon the banners of every Captaincy were lifted, and all held themselves ready to depart at the first notice.

At the commencement of the year 250, there died in Cordova the illustrious Yahye Ben Alhakem, known as El Gazali, who had been Admiral of the Seas in the time of King Hixem, and of his son the King Alhakem. In the reign of King Abderahman, Yahye Ben Alhakem had been employed as ambassador to the King of the Greeks, as also to the Christian kings, being ever greatly esteemed for the wisdom of his conduct in all these offices. He was indeed a man of singular excellence and sagacity; nor was he less remarkable for the more brilliant qualities,—the verses in which he describes a storm that he encountered on his voyage to Greece are indeed much celebrated. The death of Yahye Ben Alhakem was deeply regretted by King Muhamad, but his days were now accomplished, since he had passed the age of 94 years. This distinguished noble was born in the year 156, and in the reign of Abderahman Ben Moavia.

CHAP. L.—Of the War in Gallicia, and the origin of the rebel Hafsun ben Giafar ben Arits.

The fame of the daring irruptions undertaken on the frontiers by the people of Afranc and those of Gallicia was quickly bruited over all Spain; nor did the importance of these events fail to be increased by exaggeration; as the distance from the scene of action became greater: the losses and outrages that were suffered by the towns and their inhabitants, the number and quality of the invading forces, and every other circumstance of those onslaughts, were invariably enlarged and extended beyond their true proportions. The king received advice of all that took place from the Walies, who, despatching their couriers from Merida, informed Muhamad that the King of Gallicia had entered Lusitania and ravaged the lands around Lisbon, that he had plundered the open towns, had burnt Cintra, and had ended

by carrying off an immense amount of spoil, with captives and flocks in vast numbers.

When King Muhamad received that intelligence, he set forth with the cavalry of Andalusia, and being joined by the banners of Merida, he directed his march upon Gallicia, which he entered at Santyac. The Christians then retired to their mountains, and shut themselves up in fortresses erected on the summits of the rocks. The king returned by way of Zamora, sending the cavalry of Merida by Salamanca, and proceeding himself with that of Cordova to the Comarca of Toledo. Some authors place this expedition in the year 247, others in 249; which last appears to be the more probable date.

At this time there commenced a rebellion on the frontiers of Afranc, which proved eventually to be of great importance. The account given by our authorities of him who commenced this revolt goes to show that he was of obscure, nay, wholly unknown origin; his name was Omar Ben Hafs, but he was afterwards known as Aben Hafsun Ben Giafar Ben Arius: such at least is the parentage attributed to him by some writers. Muhamad Abdallah Ben Sebaun El Cairvani affirms that he received his account of this rebel from the lips of his own sons; yet even he has furnished us with nothing certain as to his orgin. This man, living by the humble labour of his hands in the Comarca of Raya, near Ronda, became discontented with the poverty of his condition, and departed to the city of Torgiela, hoping there to find the means of securing a better lot. He then fell into company with certain loose fellows, with whom he became a robber on the public roads, and for his boldness was eventually made their leader. Pursued by the emissaries of justice, he resisted or baffled all attempts to break up his band; nay rather, the sort of reputation he had acquired procured him followers, and these at length became so numerous, that Omar was enabled to take possession of Adharwera, a fortified place also called Calat-Yabaster, and reputed to be an inaccessible hold.

This is one of the relations among many given respecting the commencement of the rebellion of which we are now about to speak. Driven out of Andalusia in the year 250, Omar Ben Hafsun passed with his bandits to the frontiers of Afranc, where he made himself master of the fortress of

Rotalyehud, a place rendered impregnable by its position, since it stood on the summit of inaccessible rocks, at the foot of which rolled a river whereby the site of the fortress was entirely surrounded.

The Christians dwelling in the mountains of Afranc, perceiving the good fortune by which the early undertakings of this robber were attended, suffered no long time to elapse before they sought his friendship, and uniting for disobedience and rebellion, the people of Ainsa, Ben Auare, and Ben Asque, confederated together; then, all combining their strength with that of Omar Ben Hafsun Ben Arius, they came down upon Barbastar, Huesca, and Afraga, with the impetuosity of torrents that descend from their hills in the season of floods, exciting the towns to rise in rebellion against their sovereign, and offering peace and security to all who would join them, whom they promised to protect from the Walies of the frontiers, but cutting up the fields and burning the houses of such as resisted them, or who refused to adopt their war-cry and join their bands. They occupied many fortresses of the district, and pushed their enterprise so far as to enter the Comarcas of Lerida.

Now the Wali of Saragossa might without doubt have repressed these disorders without difficulty, had he taken them in hand at their birth; but he had received intelligence of his approaching deposition, and angrily awaiting the arrival of his successor, he would make no movement to impede the progress of the evil. Remaining inactive in the city himself, neither did he give orders for the assembly of their forces by the Alcaides of the province, but sat quietly permitting the danger to increase, while not a banner was raised to oppose the progress of those rebel hordes, then first venturing to lift their heads. Nay, the Alcaide of Zerida, called Abdelmelic Ben Abdallah, attached himself to the party of Hafsun Ben Arius, and gave him entrance into the city; other Alcaides of fortresses less important soon afterwards following his example. This increased the boldness of the rebels to such a degree, that they poured their troops over the whole land, and carried their incursions even to the shores of the Ebro.

When King Muhamad was advised of this insurrection, he wrote to his Walies, commanding them to levy a powerful

force, and hoping to finish with those insurgents at a blow. The king himself went from Cordova to the city of Toledo with the people of Andalusia, and was there joined by the troops of the whole province, when those of Murcia and Valencia departed for the scene of the rebellion, commanded by Zeid Ben Casim, a grandson of the king. To Prince Almondhir Muhamad entrusted the frontier of Gallicia, which he was charged by the king his father to maintain with the troops of Merida and Lusitania.

CHAP. LI.—Of the perfidy of Hafsun Ben Arius.

When Omar Ben Hafsun Ben Arius perceived the terrible storm that was gathering over his head, he sent very humble letters to the king. With false words and a feigned submission, he declared by heaven and earth that all his previous actions had been but artifice and dissimulation, adopted by him to lead the enemies of Islam to their destruction; he added that he was prepared to turn his arms against the Christians of Afranc whenever the proper moment should arrive, and added the expression of his hope that Muhamad, well persuaded of his loyalty and the uprightness of his intentions, would attribute no importance to his seeming enmity against those of his own Faith, but, despising appearances, would assist him with the troops of the Eastern frontier, or those of Valencia; or at the least he entreated that the king would grant him a limited truce, with permission to hold at his disposal the Alcaidia of Huesca or Barbastar, or to the end that, with the aid thus afforded him, he might be enabled to fall upon the enemies of the Faith with the blow which he had been preparing for them.

These protestations, with the many good and convincing words added by the audacious envoy whom Omar Ben Arius had charged with his message, persuaded the King Muhamad, who gave full credence to his professions.

Omnipotent Allah! when Thou in Thy fixed and eternal decrees hath resolved on the destruction of a state, or the ruin and calamity of a people, often doth it please Thee to make our own ignorance the instrument of the evil, and we

ourselves then place in the hands of our enemies the arms that are to destroy us, or we hasten to rush blindfold towards the precipice at the foot of which we are to dash ourselves to pieces! Thus did it please Thee to bewilder the understanding of the King Muhamad, and permit that he should give credit to the false promises and faithless protestations of Aben Hafsun Ben Arius.

Muhamed replied favourably to these traitorous proposals, offering for his share of the undertaking to give Omar the troops led by his own grandson, Zeid Ben Casim, and promising that when he had secured the frontier of Afranc, and occupied the fortresses then held by the Christians, to give that traitor, even Omar Ben Arius, the government of Huesca, or that of Saragossa. His own division of the army the king commanded to depart for Merida and join the host then serving under the Prince Almondhir on the frontiers of Gallicia, while to the youthful Wali, Zeid Ben Casim, his grandson, he gave the charge of proceeding to the mountains of Afranc, in company with Omar Aben Hafsun, as hath been related above.

But that perfidious traitor, in agreement with Abdelmelic, the Alcaide of Zerida, had disposed all things for putting the Wali Zeid to death, and effecting the destruction of all the Moslemah commanded by that prince. The latter had joined the troops of Aben Hafsun in the plains of Alcanit, and his people had fixed their camp in the vicinity of the same, with all the confidence of allies. Zeid Ben Casim himself was received with many marks of honour and much profession of esteem; but that same night, while the people of Valencia and Murcia were reposing without suspicion, they were attacked by those of Aben Hafsun Ben Arius, and before they could even prepare for their defence, the greater part of them were murdered; very few succeeding in delivering their lives from the swords of those midnight assasssins. Among the victims was the young Wali, Zeid Ben Casim, who died bravely fighting with his treacherous assailants, before he had completed his eighteenth year.

The sad remains of his army, which were all that had escaped from that field of crime, came with no other possession remaining to them, save only the lives which their flight had hardly saved, to bring the fatal intelligence of

this misfortune to Muhamad, whose indignation at the hearing of it knew no bounds, and who deeply swore to take the most sanguinary vengeance, an oath in which he was immediately accompanied by all the generals of his guard and by the assembled Walies of Andalusia. That perfidious and atrocious slaughter of Alcanit was committed in the year 252.*

The king instantly sent letters to the Prince Almondhir, making known to him the treachery committed by Aben Hafsun Ben Arius, and charging him to make every arrangement needful for taking a complete and signal vengeance on those perfidious rebels, Omar and Abdelmelic. Many cavaliers of Cordova and Seville also departed with these despatches as volunteers in the war of vengeance about to be waged.

Now that year of 252 was one of excessive drought in Africa and Spain, as was the following; nay, there fell but little rain in those regions during the next ten years. About this time there died the illustrious Wali Abdelruf Ben Abdelsalem: he had been Governor of Merida and Toledo more than seven years; he was also Vizier of the Council of State, and deservedly enjoyed the utmost confidence of the king. The death of this great officer was deeply deplored, and his remains were attended to the tomb by all the people of Cordova. The prayer for him was made by Bixar Ben Abderahman, brother of King Mohamad, because his own son was then on the frontier with Prince Almondhir.

CHAP. LII.—Of the taking of Rotalyehud by Prince Almondhir.

While the son of King Mohamad Ben Abderahman was passing without opposition through Gallicia, the mountains of Albortat and the Albaskenses, he received those letters from his father of which mention hath been made above; and commanding that they should instantly be read before

* A.D. 866.

the whole host, every man was thereby filled with a just indignation. Then Almondhir, desisting from all previous undertakings, departed himself in search of those perfidious rebels with his whole force, which he divided into three bodies; but the assassins did not dare present themselves to the encounter of valiant men, and hid themselves within the cities which they had made their holds. The king's troops then proceeded, bearing the devastation of the tempest on their path, to the mountains and territory of Rotalyehud, which was the robber-nest of the treacherous Omar Ben Hafsun. The bolder and less perfidious rebel Abdelmelic there sallied forth against them; but, notwithstanding the advantages of his position, he was defeated with a fearful slaughter of his people, and the brave men of Andalusia then satiated their swords, which were thirsting for the blood of the traitors. Those who could save themselves from that carnage made haste to take shelter in the wildest asperities of the mountains, leaving the field of contention hidden beneath the corpses of the slain. Night alone suspended the slaughter, which was indeed fearful. The leader Abdelmelic escaped with life, but was grievously wounded; one suicide of his boldest followers accompanied him from the field, and he finally threw himself into the stronghold of Rotalyehud.

On the following day Prince Almondhir commanded the assault of the fortress; and although it appeared to be rendered impregnable by its position, yet the obstinate valour and ardent desire of vengeance which fired the Andalusians prevailed; they took those lofty walls by storm; and among the bold men who defended them, fighting till they died, was found the leader Abdelmelic, who expired as his enemies laid their hands on his person, when he was instantly beheaded. Many others of the rebel officers were dashed to pieces by falling over the precipices, as they sought to fly from the avenging swords then exacting payment for the blood of Zeid Ben Casim and the lives of his host. Almondhir sent the head of Abdelmelic to Cordova, with intelligence of the victory he had gained, but which did not fail to cost the victors as well as the vanquished very dearly, seeing that large numbers lost their lives in the attempt to scale the lofty rocks of that fortress.

The death of Abdelmelic and the loss of Rotalyehud intimidated the rebels taking refuge in the mountains of Afranc; and many towns, fearing lest they also should be sacrificed to the vengeance of the Andalusian army, came to offer their submission to Prince Almondhir. Among those which took this step were Lerida, Afraga, Ainsa, Baltania, and other strong places. The traitor Hafsun Aben Arius did not dare await the coming of the avenging Prince, but, abandoning the country, he concealed himself among the mountains of Arbe. He advised his partizans and followers to offer their submission to the conqueror, as the only way to avoid present ruin, but promised that he would return at no distant period, and again receive them to his protection. Dividing his treasures among his most faithful followers, he then left them all, for the better security of his life, and was presently afterwards lost to view among the unfathomable depths of the mountains.

The country being now fully subjected, and all that fierce people of Eastern Spain reduced to quietude, the Prince Almondhir returned to Cordova, where he was received with acclamations of triumph; all the people of the city went forth to meet him; King Muhamad, with a large number of his principal generals, proceeding to a considerable distance from Cordova for that purpose. The day of the prince's arrival was indeed made one of festival and universal rejoicing. The king distributed vestments, arms, and horses, to many young men who had made their first essay of war on that occasion; to Mansur Ben Mohamad Ben Abi Bahlul he gave an honourable office, appointing him to be Wali Alardi, or Inspector of Reviews.

CHAP. LIII.—Of the expeditions undertaken into Gallicia, and beyond the mountains.

In the year 254 there was a total eclipse of the moon, which lasted from the beginning of night to the dawn, and cast deep darkness all around. In the same year King Muhamad sent his ships to make a descent on the coast of Gallicia: he entrusted the command of that expedition to

the Ameer of the Sea, Walid Ben Abdelhamid Ben Ganim; and the Armada, setting sail with a fair wind, arrived, after a prosperous navigation, on the northern coast of Spain. The fleet was just on the point of debarking the troops at the mouths of the Nahar-Mino, when a violent storm suddenly arose; the waves assumed the form of mountains, and several of the ships, dashed against each other by the fury of the winds, were broken to pieces by the force of the shocks thus received; others were thrown on the rocky shores of certain islands of that district, when most of those they carried lost their lives; yet, among the few saved, the commander Abdelhamid Ben Ganim was one.

That destruction of the Moslemah fleet inspired the Christians of Gallicia with unwonted courage, and they were thereby emboldened to pour their bands over the whole territory of Lusitania: they occupied Salamanca, with other places of less importance, and continuing their progress, advanced to the city of Coria.

The news of these fatal events were not slow to reach Cordova, where they filled all hearts with sadness: the more pious and sincere considered those misfortunes as punishments inflicted by the anger of heaven, on account of the falling off in religious zeal of which the Moslemah had of late been guilty; these persons considering that so much exactitude in the fulfilment of their religious duties as had distinguished their fathers, was no more to be found among themselves, and declaring that the children of Allah were more busily occupied with trifling amusements and vain delights than with the propagation of Islam. Others said that in the service of God there should be no seeking the easiest way, no endeavouring to save oneself labour, and that an expedition against the enemies of the Faith, which sought to make itself an easier path by embarking on the sea, could not be pleasing to God, who had therefore refused to bless the undertaking or permit it to be successful.

King Muhamad now commanded that the Walies governing on the frontier of Afranc, Ishac Ben Ibrahim El Ocaili and Zaide Ben Rustam, should proceed to restrain the Christians of the mountains, who had now occupied Medina Pampeluna; and those generals assembled their forces accordingly. They made irruptions on the country, and laid

siege to the city; nay, they had even obtained possession of the towers, and were on the point of carrying the place, when a large body of auxiliaries appearing from Afranc, restored the courage of the Christians, who compelled them to retire, and they were eventually obliged to break up their camp, retreating to the shores of the Ebro as best they might.

On the side of Gallicia, the Walies had in the first instance been more successful: they had made numerous incursions on the borders, and had taken many captives as well as rich spoil. Full of exultation, they were then returning with these riches, and, despising the power of the enemy, had made a halt, wherein they were negligently permitting their people to repose, without remembering that the meanest of gnats shall oft-times puncture the eye of the bravest lion, when they were suddenly attacked in a narrow defile where the cavalry had not space to move. The host had been much weakened by the cares bestowed on the spoil and captives, which had been despatched with the advance, and the rear-guard now suffered cruelly; very great was the confusion, terrible the carnage, and many were those that remained captives in the power of the enemy. These repeated disasters took all joy from the hearts of the Moslemen of Andalusia, and brought consternation to those who were defending the frontiers.

In this year that learned Alfaqui, Yahye El Laithi, who was the disciple of Malic Ben Anas, and had twice visited the East, died at Cordova. This is he who was called the Wise Andalusian and the Learning of Spain. Much distinguished in his youth by the learned Malic, his abode was so much sought by disciples and zealous hearers in his riper age, that it had all the appearance of a college or public school.

In the commencement of the year 256 the king gave orders for the assembling of troops in Andalusia, and with those of Merida and the Comarcas of that city, he sent his son, the Prince Almondhir, to Alaba and the Albaskense mountains, there to castigate Muza, the Wali of Saragossa, who had refused obedience to Abdelwahib Ben Abdelruf, the governor appointed to that city by his sovereign. The prince arrived before Saragossa, but the Wali Muza closed

the gates, and Almondhir, after having encamped before them during twenty-five days, became unwilling to waste his time in that siege; he therefore passed on to the frontier of Afranc, making incursions on and devastating the Comarcas of Alaba, whence he took much spoil and some captives, with whom he returned determined then to lay close siege to Saragossa.

In this year, and on the night of Saturday the 20th day of the moon Safir, there appeared in the heavens a great spot of a red colour, and glowing like living fire; it remained visible from the beginning of night to the dawn, and caused infinite terror among the ignorant and untaught people, who had never seen anything of the like kind. At this time there died in Cordova Ibrahim Ben Muslema, called Abu Ishac: he was many years Wali of the Zoco, or Superintendent of Markets, and had always been much respected as well as feared by the merchants and traders, seeing that he was a man of pure integrity, very upright in his judgments, and one who would not accept a gift from any man.

CHAP. LIV.—OF THE ENTRANCE OF PRINCE ALMONDHIR INTO SARAGOSSA, AND THAT OF THE KING INTO THE CITY OF TOLEDO.

In the year 257, Prince Almondhir still continued to make war on the frontier of Eastern Spain, and he was laying close siege to Saragossa, when a messenger approached his camp with information to the effect that the Wali Muza had that morning been found dead in his bed: but this death did not occur without much suspicion of his having been suffocated therein. The city then surrendered at once to Prince Almondhir; who instantly sent his Forcnicos or couriers with that intelligence to the king his father; the latter receiving it with great joy.

In that same year, the people of Toledo, moved by the suggestions of seditious men, had proclaimed the son of Muza their Wali, although he had been deprived by his sovereign of the government of that city some few years previously. The name of the Wali thus proclaimed was Abu Abdallah Muhamed Ben Muza Aben Lobia, a general of distinguished bravery and well experienced in the busi-

ness of war, but discontented and not well-affected to the government of his king. He had, indeed, been long in rebellion, as before related, had formed secret relations with the enemies of the faith, and his Christian allies now gave him aid in his preparations for continued revolt.

Made aware of these proceedings on the part of the inhabitants of Medina Toledo and their self-elected Wali, King Muhamad assembled the troops of Andalusia, and with them and the cavalry of his guard he set forth towards the Comarcas of Toledo. Those of the city who were disposed to resist declared themselves prepared to defend their Wali, but the prudent general would not entrust the safety of his life to their walls, because he dreaded the natural inconstancy of the popular mind, and not without reason: knowing, moreover, that the king was followed by a powerful host, he saw clearly that resistance was impossible, and leaving the city under the pretext of intending to make a recognizance of the enemy's force, he presently afterwards sent back certain of his officers to the principal men of Toledo, with a recommendation to the effect that they should resign themselves at once to the obedience of the king, and entreat his mercy, since they had not troops sufficient for opposing him, nor the needful dispositions made for sustaining a siege.

The populace, and the great majority of those who haunt the streets, would fain have torn the messengers who brought that recommendation into a thousand pieces; but the persuasions and advice of the principal citizens calmed the fury of their ill-considered intention, and the envoys of Abu Abdallah escaped the doom with which they were menaced. It was finally determined that an embassy should go forth imploring the pardon of King Muhamad; and this being done, the Toledans were not refused the grace they sought. But among the generals attending the king there were not a few who counselled him to destroy the walls and towers of that city; they considering it better to deprive them of the temptation to future rebellion which those defences presented, seeing that the strength of the fortifications gave confidence to the unquiet minds of the people. Yet God did not see fit to allow that good counsel to be heard. Muslemah Abu Said, son of the King, and Wali of Sidonia, was

the person who most earnestly entreated Muhamad to take that step; but Hixem Abulwalid, Alasbag Abulcasim, and Abderahman Abulmotaraf, who were also sons of the king, supported the contrary opinion, and their counsels prevailed. Muhamad remained some days at Toledo, and having made all needful arrangements for the quiet and good order of the city, he then returned to Cordova, where he was received with many demonstrations of gladness.

In the year 258, there died at Murcia, which was his native place, Abdelgebar Ben Muza Ben Obeidala El Sameti, Reader of the Koran, a doctor of extraordinary erudition.

Now King Muhamad was a man of a singularly mild nature, and was accustomed to converse with much kindliness, and even familiarity, with the people of his household and service. Among those who were thus favoured was Abdallah Ben Casim, his Alcatib or private secretary, who was much valued by Muhamad for his abilities and worth. One day this officer entered the king's chamber while a violent storm of thunder and lightning was passing over the city, and the clouds darkened the rooms of the palace, when he found Muhamad amusing himself with several children, holding one of singular beauty and grace on his knees, and taking great pleasure in the occupation he had chosen. "Wherefore dost thou come on a day like this?" said the king to his secretary; "we can do no work in such weather, as thou seest." "My Lord," replied Abdallah, "there is a saying among the people, to the effect that it is good to be with children when thunders are raging, and I say the same." He then continued in words to the following effect:—

"Good is it to be with infants when thunders resound, good also to hear the pleasant murmur of the flowing beakers and the rejoicing guests."

"Not ill doth the beautiful cupbearer fulfil his office when the clouds are crowning the tall trees of the garden.

"See how the branches bend beneath the sweet and gracious burthen of fair drops that the wind hath brought them.

"And now, behold how all smiles radiantly around us, glittering in the rays of the returning sun!"

The king was pleased with the occurrence and with these

verses, which Abdallah recited with much grace: he commanded to bring sweetmeats and a collation, goblets and the liquor Sahba;* also that musicians and singers should come before him. But during the feast Muhamad secretly bade the little slave who served him to throw the goblets at the head of Abdallah; and the boy, who knew well how to obey his lord, threw them one after another as commanded. Yet Abdallah so turned his head that he avoided the blows of all, and said to the child,—

"Oh, lovely one, be not cruel, seeing that cruelty doth not accord well with beauty.

"The beautiful heaven itself is only delightful when it is serene: but see, its looks of anger now terrify and dismay us by their gloom."

The king applauded the reply and the verses of his secretary, and commanded that a Bidra (a purse of ten thousand Adirhames) should be given him, or, if he preferred that gift, the beautiful little slave who was the cupbearer: but Abdallah preferred the purse to the beautiful face of the child.

About this time it was that a flash of lightning struck the Great Mosque with a fearful crash, and fell upon the very carpet whereon the king Muhamad was at that moment making his prayer.†

CHAP LV.—Of new incursions on the territory of Gallicia, and of various events and calamities.

In the year 259, Prince Almondhir made another incursion on the territories of Gallicia, where he combated the Christians with varying fortune. At the passage of the river Sahagun, which flows into the Douro, he brought them to a pitched battle, in which there died many brave cavaliers

* Sahba, the name of a colourless liquid used as an evasion of the Alcoranic prohibition against the Ghmar or red wine.—*Condé.*

† The Archbishop Don Rodrigo, in his History of the Arabs, tells us that the lightning killed two men who were praying at the side of the king.—*Ibid.*

of Cordova and Seville, with many of Toledo and Merida; but the Christians on their part were subjected to so cruel a carnage, that they were employed during more than eleven days in burying their dead, and could not make an end of the work even in that time.

Prince Almondhir then passed along the whole frontier, performing wondrous feats of arms, although everywhere meeting the most obstinate resistance, seeing that the people of Gallicia are the bravest and most warlike race of all who believe in the Christian faith; and there rarely passed a day wherein there was not more than one sharp skirmish between the opposing leaders. At the end of the year the prince returned into Lusitania.

In the year 260 there was so terrible a drought in Arabia, Syria, Egypt, Africa, and Spain, that the springs and fountains failed entirely; the fields did not bring forth their fruits, and the general sterility producing famine, the poorer of the people died of hunger. After this succeeded a pestilence, which caused a frightful mortality throughout the West, as well in Africa as in Spain. In Arabia, the Mother of cities, even Mecca, was deserted by her inhabitants; there no longer remained within her streets any other than the mere passing traveller, and the Caaba was closed for a considerable space of time. These calamities prevented the going forth of any host; and during six years there was no war, save only that ever waged on the frontier, for the maintenance thereof.

In the year 263 the Prince Almondhir once more directed his march upon Gallicia, where he took much spoil and made many of the Christians captive; but these advantages were not obtained without much hard fighting, and the loss of many of the Moslemah troops. In this year died Yahye Ben Hegag, who lost his life while fighting in one of the skirmishes just alluded to: he was a cavalier of distinguished bravery, and had been much renowned for his voyages to the East.

The traitorous Omar Ben Hafsun Aben Arius, who had meanwhile found shelter and protection among the Christians of Afranc, now offered to become their vassal and pay them tribute, on condition that they should lend him the aid of their arms, he promising on his part to put into

their possession such fortresses as he should occupy with the help of their troops. And accordingly he obtained possession of all the strong places on the shores of the river Segre, when he sold the cities of the Moslemah to the enemies of Islam; and the Christians, to whom he thus paid tribute, called him a king.

Prince Almondhir, with the troops of Merida and Toledo, passed the year 265 in various irruptions along the whole frontier line of Gallicia. The Christians had taken possession of Zamora, holding it with great care, and having strongly fortified and increased its defences; to this place, therefore, Almondhir laid close siege, and was on the point of reducing it to surrender when he received notice that the King of Gallicia was approaching with a powerful host to its relief. He prepared at once to set his Moslemah forces in order of battle, and receive the coming foe as was befitting. But there were now found to be timid and superstitious men in the host, who refused the fight; nor, despite all the valour of the prince and his generals, could they be brought to do their duty, as from good Moslemah is ever to be expected. A frightful eclipse of the moon is said by some authors to have taken place at the time, but other writers declare that this event did not occur till the year following: be that as it may, the utmost that Almondhir could now effect was that his people should retire without disorder before the face of their enemies; nor was even that much secured but by unheard-of labours on the part of the Alcaides. Many brave and noble cavaliers died by the side of Almondhir in this retreat, as they struggled to restrain the impetuosity of the Christian foe pressing on their rear and eagerly seeking their lives.

In this year, or, as appears more probable, in the end of that preceding, died the Cadi of Tadmir, Fadl Ben Fadl Ben Amira, a man respected by all who knew him on account of his virtues and integrity, and one who for his consummate prudence and sagacity had been much consulted by the princes.

In the year 267, and on Thursday the 22nd day of the Moon of Xawal, there was an earthquake of so terrible a kind that many palaces and other magnificent buildings were thrown down with frightful ruin: some that were not wholly

destroyed were yet cleft from the roof to the basement, while others were so much shaken that it became needful to take them down and rebuild them from the foundations. Mountains sank to the level of the plain, and rocks receding formed awful gulphs. The earth opened in several places, swallowing up towns and eminences of great altitude, the sea drew back and departed from the coasts, islands disappeared, while rocks that had been previously conspicuous objects on the coast sank in the deeps, and were swallowed up for ever from the sight of men. The people departed from the cities and went forth into the fields; the birds abandoned their nests, and the wild beasts, rushing in terror from their dens, went roaring about through the plains, to the grievous increase of the general confusion and dismay. Never had men seen or heard of anything similar to this catastrophe: many of the most beautiful towns of the north and west of Spain were totally ruined.

All these things produced so great an influence on the minds of men, more especially on those of the ignorant and vulgar, that they could not believe them to be natural, as the Prince Almondhir painfully laboured to convince his people they truly were, although but rarely witnessed. Vainly did he declare that these things had no relation to the works of man, whether good or evil, and that they could not be influenced in any way by his acts; it was in vain that he showed them how the earth trembled alike for the Moslemah and the Christians, for the most hurtful and the most innocent creatures, without distinction; the ignorance and vain fears of the multitude prevailed; they refused to be convinced, and the labours of such as would have taught them better were but lost pains. By the consent of the King Muhamad, his son Prince Almondhir then made a truce with the King of the Christians, who sent his messengers to Cordova; these Envoys being accompanied to that city by cavaliers of the Moslemah army.*

* This embassy must be that of Dulcidio, which is mentioned by our ancient chroniclers.—*Condé.*

CHAP. LVI.—OF THE INCURSION MADE BY THOSE OF AFRANC WITH OMAR BEN HAFSUN INTO SPAIN, AND THE BATTLE OF AYBAR.

THEN Omar Ben Hafsun, fearing lest Almondhir should take the opportunity of the leisure afforded him by that truce to attack himself, begged those of Afranc and of the mountains of Albortat to assist him with such troops as they could spare; whereupon the enemies of Allah got together in uncountable hordes, and came pouring from their mountains over all the country, even to the shores of the Ebro. The Walies of Saragossa and Huesca met the enemy at Tutila, but were defeated, and sent demands for succour to Cordova as well as to the Walies of Merida and Toledo.

Aroused by the danger of so impetuous an irruption, Mohamed himself instantly set forth in person with all his cavalry, and having joined his forces to those of the Prince Almondhir, they disposed their Alchamizes * in the best order, appointing a carefully selected body of cavalry and foot-soldiers to each division. All arrangements being thus made they set forth to meet the Christians. The advanced guard was led by Almondhir, and the main body by King Mohamad himself; the command of the right wing was given to Aben Abdelruf, that of the left to Aben Rustam, the rear being conducted by the Wali of Sidonia, Abu Said, who was another of the sons of the king.

The people of Afranc, finding of what quality was the army approaching against them, then became afraid of giving battle, and withdrew by forced marches to their fortresses. But on that occasion it was to the Moslemah as if the mountains had been the most level plains; they pursued their foe, resolved to take him wherever he might be found, and one morning, at the hour of dawn, Almondhir discovered the camp of Afranc at a short distance from the place where he had permitted his troops to enjoy a short repose. The enemy now saw himself to be so near the battle that to refuse it was no longer possible: wherefore the deadly strife was begun, and until late in the day was maintained with

* See note, p. 300.

equal valour and impetuosity on both sides; yet the Moslemah did finally succeed in effecting the defeat of the Christians, Garcia, their king, remaining dead on the field, with the principal cavaliers of his train: Omar Ben Hafsun Aben Arius was also mortally wounded, and the plains around lay strewed with corpses that were floating in their blood. This day of glorious memory for the Moslemah, and of unhappy recollections for the Christian faith, was in the summer of the year 269;* the spoil of arms and other riches left by the enemy was enormous, and those rich gains were very grateful to the covetousness of the Mosleman soldiery.

Prince Almondhir remained on the frontier until the winter, but the king returned to Cordova, being received with acclamations of triumph and gladness in all the cities and towns through which he passed. On this occasion verses were made by Muhamad, which have been preserved in that collection of Ahmed Ben Farag, which he has entitled "The Gardens;" or rather they were in fact made by the king on his return from an earlier expedition, and when he was much younger; but they are most commonly attributed to this period, and are therefore given here:—

I come from fields of death, and in its sheath
My good sword rests; but thou, O glaive of love
Giv'st no repose; thou still dost wound my heart
With torments ever new. Afar, methought,
Were pain and woe that could not well increase;
Yet fiercer glow the fires within my breast
As I draw near thee, Love. I seek my tent,
I lay the ponderous weeds of war aside;
But keener than the steel art Thou, fell Passion.

Cordova! do I near thee, my bright home,
Or dost thou fly my steps? Thy wished-for towers
Show not their heads to him whose longing eye
Looks but for them in all the wide expanse
Of the far heaven. Oh, cloud that veils the sun,
Fall down in blessings on the guardian trees
That shade mine Alcazar, and on the meads

* It was in this, the renowned battle of Aybar, that Garcia Iñiguez, King of Navarre, died fighting against the Moors, in the second year of his reign.—*Condé*.

That edge my proud Rusafa!*—make them bright
And gaily green as I with blood of foes
Have coloured fair those fields, whence gladly now
My steps return. The plain war's breath has tainted
Pleased do I leave! On the pale brow of night
My lances sparkled brighter than the stars;
And to my myriad warriors, I, their lord,
Was a strong shield, I led them to the fight;
To their fast showering blows my presence gave
Redoubled strength, and a new impulse lent
To their high valour.

CHAP. LVII.—OF THE DECLARATION OF PRINCE ALMONDHIR AS SUCCESSOR TO THE KINGDOM, AND OF THE DEATH OF KING MUHAMAD.

THE day on which Muhamad entered Cordova on his return from the battle of Aybar was one of great festival, all the people of the city going forth to receive him. The king made many acknowledgments to the cavaliers who had accompanied him, and presented them with rich gifts of horses, arms, and magnificent robes. The frontier being ultimately subjected to obedience, and all things placed in security, Prince Almondhir also returned to Cordova, seeing that the season of the rains had come; but on his way he required hostages from several cities of Eastern Spain, of whose fidelity he had grave doubts.

And now, as a reward for services so important, and considering that all men regarded Almondhir as the pillar of the state, King Muhamad commanded that the Walies of the principal provinces should repair to Cordova, and in their presence, as well as that of the Viziers, Cadies, and Hagibs of his Council and Royal Household, he declared the Prince Almondhir to be thenceforth his associate in the empire, and at his death the successor to his throne. Then all the Viziers and Councillors of the State who were present swore obedience and fidelity to the Prince without reserve or exceptions. This solemn oath was taken in the year 270.

* The Rusafa is a species of quay or place of debarkation for merchandise, but it here means a promenade also; the noble embankments which were used as quays by the Cordovan merchants serving also as a public walk along the Guadalquiver for the inhabitants.—TR.

It is said that at this time Omar Ben Hafsun Aben Arius died of his wounds; when his son Calib Aben Hafsun renewed the compact made by his father with the Christians dwelling in the mountains of Afranc: and, the natural desire of vengeance animating those people, they descended with the rebel Calib and his partizans from the mountains behind Yaca, where Aben Hafsun had his chief refuge, into the territory of Borja, whence they made incursions on the hither bank of the Ebro, calling the rebel chief Calib Aben Hafsun the king of that country.

When intelligence of these things reached Cordova, Prince Almondhir placed himself at the head of the cavalry of Toledo which had been assembled by the general Walid Ben Abdelhamid, and directed his march towards the scene of disorder. The prince took the road by Valencia, because the incursions of the rebels descended along the whole shore of the Ebro; but when the latter heard that Almondhir was approaching against them they retired to their mountains.

Almondhir then made halt at Tortosa, commanding the Wali Abdelhamid to proceed to the defence of the frontier and to the observation of the rebel movements. In the course of that year Walid Ben Abdelhamid accordingly fought many battles, yet none of any great importance, with those insurgents; but in the next year he obtained certain advantages over them, taking possession of the fortresses on the Segre and the Cinca, with those of others on the rivers that fall into the Ebro. Finally, however, and at the passage of Hisna-Xariz, having defeated a body of Christian troops led by certain nobles of the mountains of Afranc, who were partizans of Aben Hafsun, Abdelhamid pursued the flying foe with too little caution, and fell into an ambush laid with that intent by the Christians, when the Mosleman army was surrounded on all sides within a narrow valley, for which the mountains barred their escape. The Wali, grievously wounded, soon lay helpless on the field, and was taken prisoner by the foe; but as the commanders of that host had long known his bravery and the elevation of his character, which was in esteem for excellence on all the frontier, the Christian leeches were commanded to bind up his wounds; and their general treated him with much honour.

The remains of Abdelhamid's force meanwhile took shelter in the cities of the frontier; but many of the Moslemah there fell captive into the hands of the Christians.

The news of that disaster caused much sorrow to Prince Almondhir, who deeply mourned the loss of so many brave cavaliers. He sent envoys to treat for the ransom of Abdelhamid, for which he paid a large sum in doubloons of gold; that general being in great repute through all the mountains of Afranc. This defeat occurred in the end of the year 272.

The most important events and those that are of least moment, the fall of a mountain and that of a willow-leaf, all proceed alike from the Divine Will, and take place as they are written on the tables of the Eternal Destinies; when, where, and as it shall seem good to the wisdom of Allah. Thus it happened that the King Muhamad, being without any kind of indisposition whatever, and taking his recreation in the gardens of his Alcazar with his viziers and the more familiar of his attendants, Haxem Ben Abdelaziz Ben Chalid, the Wali of Jaen, addressed the monarch in these words:—"How fortunate is the condition of kings! for them only is the world truly delicious, while for the rest of mankind life has but few and passing pleasures! How lovely are their gardens—what magnificent palaces are their abodes, and how richly are these supplied with all delights. Yet must death draw the cord, when it has been extended to the limit determined by the hand of fate, and the most powerful prince then finishes as doth the rustic labourer and the dweller in a hovel."

To this Muhamad replied—"The path of life doth indeed appear to be strewed with flowers of fair odour for the foot of kings, but of a truth the blossoms are roses with very sharp thorns. The death of all creatures is the work of God's hand; in death is the commencement of ineffable good for the just man, and but for death I should not now be King of Spain."

Muhamad then retired to his apartments and lay down to repose, but there fell upon his eyelids that sleep from which no man wakes; that sleep which, causing all the delights of this world to vanish, makes equally an end of

the cares and vain hopes of human life. The occurrence took place towards twilight of Sunday the 29th day of the Moon Safir, in the year 273.

Muhamad was 65 years of age, or near that period; he had reigned thirty-four years and eleven months; he had one hundred sons, the children of his numerous wives, and thirty-three of these survived him. A man of upright life, Muhamad was the friend of wise men, and took much pleasure in the conversation of the Alimes and Hafitzes, or relators of historical facts and of the Traditions. The learned Alfaqui Baqui Ben Chalad, called Abu Abderahman, was greatly favoured by this monarch, who defended him from his rivals when the latter had succeeded in prevailing on the Aljama of Cordova to reject his tenets and condemn the doctrines he taught. In the distribution of charges, offices, and employments, this monarch is said to have preferred the Syrians to the Veledi Arabians: the private secretary of Muhamad was his own son Abdelmelic.

King Muhamad Ben Abderahman resembled in many respects the Caliph Abdelmelic Ben Meruan; not in personal appearance only, but also in the qualities of his mind. He wrote with elegance, and made very good verses. In Cordova he performed many useful works, constructing magnificent baths and commodious Abrevadores for the watering of cattle and horses. He did not alter the fabrication of the coin, but left all as he had received it from his fathers. His bier was followed to the tomb by all the dwellers in Cordova, and the prayer was made by his son Almondhir; seeing that although that Prince was absent at the Baths of Almeria when the death of his father took place, yet, being summoned immediately, he arrived in time to perform the duty in question, and to accompany his bier to the grave.

CHAP. LVIII.—OF THE REIGN OF KING ALMONDHIR, SON OF MUHAMAD.

WHEN the Prince Almondhir received the unhappy intelligence of his father's death, he was at the Baths of Almeria, as above said; but departing at once for Cordova, he was

proclaimed King on the same day that saw the funeral ceremonies of his father, when the Chotba was said for him in all the Mosques of the city. He was called Abu Alhakem; the name of the mother that bore him was Othul, and he was born in the year 229.

Iza Ahmed Ben Muhamad El Razi affirms that Almondhir, son of the King Muhamad, succeeded to his father on the third day of the Moon of the first Rebie, in the year 273, on the fourth day after the death of his predecessor; he adds, that the intelligence found him, not at the Baths of Almeria, but making war on the confines of Raya, and that he arrived at his Alcazar the day previous to that of his proclamation. El Raji relates furthermore that Almondhir made the prayer for his father, and duly celebrated his funeral rites, receiving himself the homage of his people on the Sunday and Monday following.

The Hagib of that time was the Vizier Haxem Ben Abdelaziz, and he continued to hold office until put to death by command of Almondhir. This Haxem was much distinguished by Muhamad the son of Abderahman, who had made him vizier; his forefathers had been Walies to the Caliph Otman Ben Afan and others, and he was elder brother of the Cadi Aslam Ben Abdelaziz. He had been Wali of Jaen in his earlier life, and had held the government of other cities also: it was by him that the city of Ubeda was founded, and he built the greater part of the strongholds in that Comarca.

Haxem Ben Abdelaziz was indeed much esteemed by the whole Royal House of Spain, seeing that he united in his own person all the qualities demanded to make the perfect cavalier of his time, being distinguished for his bravery and the graces proper to the highly bred gentleman, as well as for his love of elegant letters, and the cultivation of his mind. Nor did he fail to enjoy the esteem of Almondhir also, during the time of Muhamad, father of that sovereign; but the former subsequently became indisposed towards him; and it is said that the first appearance of Haxem's proximate disgrace was at the taking of the oath of allegiance to Almondhir.

On this subject authors relate, that, when Almondhir arrived, the Hagib presented himself in the Hall of Alle-

giance, without further delay, and as he had descended from his horse with his vestments all folded, as they had come from the saddle. Taking the book into his hands, he began to read the accustomed formulary; but when he came to the mention of Muhamad's name, his eyes filled with tears, —he became confused; and remaining for some time unable to speak, did not well see where he had left off when he recommenced, and thus read a certain passage over again. Almondhir remarked the mistake, and looked at the Hagib with anger; but Haxem did not observe that look; and continuing his reading, went on to the end. Those who saw the frightful expression on the face of Almondhir are said to have felt terrified at its darkness, and to have seen that it threatened death. When the bier of Muhamad was borne into the tomb, Haxem threw off his cloak, and took the turban from his head, in the extremity of grief. He then entered the sepulchre and wept with bitter lamentations, exclaiming: "Oh, Muhamad! would that my soul were now with thine! and that for thee I might have drained the cup of death." All this was told to Almondhir; and the ruin of Haxem was furthermore facilitated by the enmity of Muhamad Ben Gehmar and Abdelmelic Ben Umeya, both of whom rose up against him, when they perceived that he was losing the favour of the king. Even Saida, the sister of Almondhir, was employed to promote the ruin of the house and family of Haxem; nor did any long time elapse before that evil work was accomplished, since all becomes easy, once the head of the house to be destroyed hath lost the favour of the king.

The death of Muhamad Ben Abderahman was instantly known on the frontier, and Calib Ben Hafsun Aben Arius at once descended from his mountains. By the aid of secret partizans he had speedily assembled a numerous host; and that done, he came down on the country through the district watered by the Ebro, taking possession, by surprise, of many cities in Eastern Spain. Having gathered a force of ten thousand horse, Calib Aben Hafsun then obtained possession of the cities of Saragossa and Huesca by surrender; and from thence proceeded towards Toledo. By means of his relations with certain among the Christians there, he entered that city, calling himself king thereof, and

distributing money among the poorer of the people, to induce them to proclaim him in the streets.

The accounts which reached Almondhir of these things caused him heavy cares. He commanded that the banners of Andalusia and Merida should be raised, and sent Haxem Ben Abdelaziz, with a select body of cavalry, in advance. That general arrived, by forced marches, in the immediate neighbourhood of Toledo; and the rebel Calib, fearing to sustain a siege, in a city to the inhabitants of which he could not give his confidence, departed with the flower of his army, but left a large garrison within the walls, with directions for the defence of the place. He then strongly fortified the castles of the Tagus, as he also did the fortresses Uclis, Huebde, Alarcon, and Conca; Haxem meanwhile besieging Toledo with great activity.

Calib Hafsun now demanded new succours from his allies; and that he might await the arrival of these auxiliaries in the greater safety, he proposed certain conditions to the General Haxem,—offering to surrender the city of Toledo, and retire to Eastern Spain, provided he would supply beasts of burthen in sufficient number to enable Calib to transport his wounded people, his treasures, and the various munitions which he had stored in Toledo, seeing that without these aids he could not return to the frontier by any other means than that of imposing heavy contributions on the towns through which he must pass. He added, that he had been misled by bad Moslemah, and by the Christians of Toledo; but that, being now undeceived, and seeing things as they truly were, he proposed the conditions mentioned, in all sincerity, and was ready to abide by his offers.

The compact thus proposed appeared highly acceptable to Haxem Ben Abdelaziz, and he sent notice thereof to King Almondhir; who had now arrived in the Comarcas of Toledo with his Andalusian forces; but the latter, fearing the falsehood and artifice of the rebel, sent a reply, to the effect that he would have the General Haxem be very cautious, and not permit himself to be trifled with by that crafty fox, Calib Hafsun Aben Arius. Abdelaziz was, nevertheless, entirely persuaded of Calib's sincerity; and wrote to the king, informing him that he was prepared to grant what the rebel chief had desired, since there was but

little risk in doing so, seeing that if, when the beasts of burthen were supplied, Calib Hafsun should refuse to surrender the city, he could then be met in arms; whereas, if he did surrender the place, and his sincerity thus become manifest, they would avoid a civil war, which could not but prove a great evil, and was of very doubtful consequences, even at the best that could be hoped for.

The animals required for transport were furnished accordingly; and a large body of Calib's troops came forth from the city, appearing to evacuate the same, as had been agreed. But there was also another powerful division of the rebel army still concealed within it. The rebels then took their beasts, which they loaded with their sick and provisions, leaving Toledo, in appearance, as had been stipulated; when some of the troops from Haxem's army proceeded to occupy the place. That general then sent notice to King Almondhir that he was master of the same, and that the enemy had retired to the frontiers of Eastern Spain. He added, that by especial good fortune and the favour of heaven, the civil war, by which the country had been menaced, had thus been brought to a close, insomuch that the king might now dismiss the Alcaides to their provinces, since by the course which he (Haxem) had followed, all had terminated happily. King Almondhir heard this intelligence with great satisfaction; and dismissing his troops accordingly, returned to Cordova, meditating other enterprises for the better assurance of the frontiers of Gallicia. A few days later, Haxem Ben Abdelaziz also returned to Cordova, very far from anticipating the treachery meditated by Calib Aben Hafsun.

But that rebellious traitor had no sooner been made acquainted with the return of the Andalusian troops, than he began to put his perfidious plans into execution, and the rather as he had, at the same time, notice of the rapid approach of his Christian auxiliaries. He first caused the conductors of the beasts of burthen to be cut to pieces, without suffering a single man to escape. He then sent a body of cavalry to retake possession of Toledo; which they did without difficulty, assisted by the partisans of Calib, and by his troops who were still in the city; after which, he

secured the forts on the Tagus, extending his incursions, without restraint, over the whole territory.

When notice of these things reached Cordova, King Almondhir was seized with an access of rage impossible to describe, and immediately summoned the Wali Haxem Ben Abdelaziz to his presence.

Iza Ahmed Ben Muhamed El Razi, in his History of the Hagibs of Spain, relates that on the day when this occurred, Haxem was going forth from his house, with Omar his son, at the moment when the king's letters were brought; and, meeting the messengers, he took the missives from their hand and read them. There was at that moment in the court of Haxem's palace a deputation of people from Lybia, who had come to salute his brother's son, the governor of their province. These men approached Haxem, to pay their respects to him; but the envoy who had brought the king's commands prevented them, saying: "You are mistaken: this is not the person whom you are to salute." Whereupon Haxem, who had taken cognizance of the orders sent him by Almondhir, rode forth from his house without uttering a word. The Hagib was mounted on a bright bay horse, fiery and swift as the lightning flash; and when the cavalcade arrived at that gate of the city called the gate of Dos-Huertos, the animal sprung high in the air and threw his rider out of the saddle. Haxem lay on the ground for some time, pale and almost lifeless. Then the people, remarking that notwithstanding this accident he did not return to his house, became convinced that he was carried off prisoner; and never has Cordova seen a day of more bitter weeping and lamentation than was this of Haxem's capture. Nay, it may be safely affirmed, that there was not a house in the city where the imprisonment and death of Haxem Ben Abdelaziz did not awaken the voice of mourning, seeing that his goodness was unbounded, and the benevolence of his heart had been ever ready, whether for the great or the small. The day on which he thus rode forth from his house was a Sunday, and the hour was that of the morning twilight; four days had yet to pass of the Moon Xawal, and the year was the two hundred and seventy-third of the Hegira. When the Hagib entered the presence of the king, Almondhir said to

him, very hastily: "Thou it was by whom I was so badly counselled. By thee hath aid been given to the perfidy of that traitor rebel; and this day shalt thou die, that thy fall may teach others to be prudent and cautious." Thereupon, forgetting the good services and upright intentions of his Hagib, he commanded that the head of the excellent Wali should be taken off, at the hour of evening twilight; which was done in the court of the Alcazar, on that twenty-sixth day of the Moon Xawal, in the year 273, as before related. The body and the head were then wrapped in the vestments of the slain, and sent to his family.

This death was deeply deplored by all the noblest cavaliers and generals of Spain, seeing that Haxem was one of the most loyal Walies of the empire, and had ever merited the esteem and honour of all good men. Some have affirmed that he had been taken prisoner several days before that of his death, and had been shut up in a tower of the Alcazar on the Rusafa; whence he wrote to his wife the verses that follow:—

High towers and gates of brass forbid my steps
To seek thy presence, Agha mine. Brought forth
Beneath the influence of a star unblest,
No marvel that I pine a captive lorn.
Still doth blind Fortune turn her changing wheel;
And me she casts below. My boding soul
Tells me of coming death, in tones of truth
That do not falter.

Friends would have me fly;
And say my life shall thus escape the rage
Of him who would devour it. But the flight
They counsel is for timid hearts; and mine,
If not of those that highest beat, hath ne'er
Forgotten its nobility. I fly not.

Where is the man who from the firm decrees
Of Allah hath escaped? But that just God,
Who knoweth all mine innocence, shall turn
The bitter cup that now I drink, to him
Whose hand hath given it to my lips,—whose heart
Now glories in my fall. Yea! He shall drink it,
When comes the time,—e'en to its bitterest dregs.
Such is my hope, and such my faith. Adieu.

When Almondhir had put Haxem Ben Abdelaziz to death, he gave orders that the two sons of the victim, Omar and Ahmed, who were Walies of Jaen and Ubeda, should be shut up, each in a separate tower; and he confiscated all their possessions. He then commanded the Alcaides of Andalusia and Merida to join their assembled forces, resolving to follow them himself to Medina Toledo, on which city they directed their march. The king departed accordingly, with the people of his guard, on the day following that when the troops set forth, taking in his company his brother Abdallah, who was the bravest, as well as most prudent, of all the sons of the King Muhamad Ben Abderahman.

CHAP. LIX.—OF THE DEATH OF KING ALMONDHIR IN BATTLE.

When Almondhir arrived in the territory of Toledo, the rebel Calib Hafsun dared not go forth to meet him; and his whole force shut themselves up from the sight of the angry sovereign, partly in the city, and partly in the various strongholds of the province. Then the king left his brother Abdallah to conduct the siege of Toledo, while he departed to pursue the rebels and their allies, determined to strike wherever he should find them. He attacked them, accordingly, on several points, and with varying fortunes; but for the most part the king defeated and dispersed such bodies of the enemy as ventured to encounter his troops. He obtained possession of several of the forts they had occupied; burned not a few of the towns in which Christian troops had sheltered themselves; and in that manner continued to carry on the war for more than a year, during which time few days passed without a skirmish or encounter, of greater or less importance.

In the beginning of the year 275, Almondhir was still making incursions through the province, in the hope of forcing his enemy, the son of Hafsun Aben Arius, to a pitched battle in the open field; but this the rebel avoided as carefully, and with very great art, dreading the ardent and inpetuous valour of the king, which was well known to Calib Ben Hafsun, as well as to all his host. But one day, being in

the vicinity of Hisn Huebde, the king discovered an immense force of the rebels encamped before the heights on which that fortress is built; and disregarding the great superiority of their numbers, he encouraged his people to the encounter. They attacked the insurgents accordingly, not considering that the advantage of position, as well as of numbers, was with their enemy; and Almondhir himself, fighting like a lion, arrived close to the rebel banners. Here the cavalry of the king's guard was surrounded by a countless horde of the insurgents; and Almondhir himself, unhappily transfixed by numerous lances, fell dead on the field. His brave guard fought with heroic valour; and the cavaliers who accompanied the king shared the same fate with their sovereign, whom they defended to the last, and on whose body they fell to a man, their remains forming a very mountain of corpses.

The word having gone abroad that the Ameer had fallen, the troops of Calib Aben Hafsun believed it to be their own leader who was slain, and they fled from the field of battle, in despite of all the efforts made to reassure them; yet those of Cordova being so few in number, could not pursue their flying enemy, and were furthermore compelled to refrain from doing so as night was approaching. It was not until a late hour in the course of the night that the troops were made acquainted with the unfortunate price paid for their fatal victory. Thus ended that valiant king, who died in the second year of his reign, and when he was promising to become the most glorious of all the sons of Omeya bearing rule in Spain. The exact time of his reign was one year, eleven months, and twenty-five days. His death took place at the end of the Moon of Safu, in the year 275.

When the sorrowful intelligence of the king's fall was made known in the camp before Toledo, the sentiment of regret for his loss was very general. All the valiant Moslemah there assembled had, more than once, followed his banners; they had been witness to his many exploits, and had seen him endure the fatigues of war with gladness, from his first youth. His bravery and constancy were dauntless and immutable: however great the peril, never had Almondhir been seen to change the aspect of his countenance. He

was remarkably simple in his habits of life: his arms, vestments, and table, were in no respect distinguished from those of the other generals; his tent was no larger than theirs, nor was it more beautiful, being in no way unlike the rest, and known only by its banner from the pavilions of the attendant Walies.

Abdallah, the brother of King Almondhir, whom he had left in command of the siege of Medina Toledo, now gave orders for the continuance of the operations by the Walies, while he departed from the camp, accompanied by the cavalry of his guard, and repaired to Cordova.

CHAP. LX.—Of the reign of king Abdallah, son of Muhamad.

When the news of Almondhir's lamented death arrived in Cordova, all the inhabitants of the city clothed themselves in mourning, for he had been much beloved by all, and his people had founded many hopes on his tried bravery, and the known prudence of his character. The Mexuar, or Council of State, assembled; and on that same day Abdallah, son of King Muhamad, presented himself in Cordova; when all rose up at his entrance, and proclaimed him king; swearing obedience and fidelity to his rule, without reserve or exceptions.

Abdallah's first care was to command that the body of King Almondhir should be brought to Cordova, there to receive the funeral honours suited to his rank; and this charge he confided to his brother Jacûb, who was called Abu Cosa, and to two Viziers of his guard,—many of the principal cavaliers of Cordova also volunteering to accompany the Prince Jacûb Ben Muhamad on that embassy. Abdallah was a man of a comely aspect, of fair complexion, with a due proportion of colour: his eyes, which were very large and beautiful, were blue: he was of middle stature, and admirably well proportioned. Brave and prudent, of good understanding, and possessing considerable learning, Abdallah was endowed with many of the finest qualities that best adorn the sovereign of a great people. He was born in the year 230; and the name of his mother, whom he greatly loved and respected, was Athara.

To ingratiate himself with the people, Abdallah restored their liberty to the two sons of Haxem Ben Abdelaziz,—Omar and Ahmed; commanding at the same time that their possessions, which had been confiscated by his brother Almondhir, should also be restored. The learned and renowned master of those young men, Gebir Ben Gaith, of Libla, had also been imprisoned, and him too Abdallah now set free. To Omar Ben Haxem he gave the government of Jaen, which had been held by his father; and Ahmed he made captain of the cavalry of his guard.

These gracious proofs of generosity on the part of Abdallah were very acceptable to the people, and were likewise much applauded by all the Walies, generals, superior clergy, and other principal persons of the kingdom; being all the more remarkable, as it was known that King Almondhir had given orders for the impalement of the sons of Haxem on the very day of the battle in which he died. The only persons to whom the favour shown by Abdallah to Omar and Ahmed, the sons of Haxem, was a source of displeasure, were the princes of the royal house; and it was more especially unwelcome to Prince Muhamad, Wali of Seville, the son of King Abdallah, whom the emulations of their youth, and certain rivalries in love affairs, had caused to be the enemy of those young men.

Some short time before the period now in question, there had come over from Africa into Spain an impostor, who called himself a prophet, and explained the precepts of the Koran according to his own good pleasure. This man, who was of Mersa Honain, in the land of Telencen, where he had been an Almoedan,* gave much license of manners in the doctrines which he propounded. He altered the received customs in respect to the five Azalas, or daily prayers, permitting them to be made without bathing, ablution, or the needful purifications, and introducing other novelties. He was immediately accused as Sandic, or impious, for these singular innovations; and the King

* The Monitor, or man who calls the hours of prayer from the summit of the Alminar, or tower of the mosque, is called Almoedan. These hours, which are five, are the dawn, the midday, the afternoon, the sunset, and the nightfall. They are called Asohbi, Adhohar, Alasar Almagrib, and Alatema.—*Condé.*

Abdallah, having caused his doctrines to be examined, and his mode of life to be inquired into, then ordered him to be cast into prison.

When considering the accusations against this Almoedan, and the proofs of misconduct alleged against him, the king consulted the Alfaquies and Cadies, but more particularly the learned Baqui Ben Machlad, so highly renowned for his wisdom and laudable excellence of life: by the advice of these sages King Abdallah subsequently caused the Almoedan to be impaled, or fastened to a stake.

At the end of the year 275, there died in Saragossa, Abdallah Ben Abi Naamar, who was Cadi of the Aljama in that city, a very learned man, and of the highest integrity. In Cordova there also died in that same year the elegant Alchatib, or Preacher, Abês Ben Firnàs, called Abulcasim. He was a good poet, and much esteemed by the princes of the royal house.

CHAP. LXI.—Of the war with the princes, and with the rebel Calib aben Hafsun.

Now the King Abdallah, having made all needful dispositions for departing to the siege of Medina Toledo, there to take command of the host against the rebel Aben Hafsun, had assembled all his cavalry in Cordova for that purpose, and was on the point of setting off, when his Forenicos, or couriers, arrived from Seville, with advices, to the effect that the Princes Alcasim, Alhasbag, and Muhamad, had united with the Alcaides of Elisena and Astaba, who had banded together with those of Elvira, Raya, and the hill-country of Ronda, to oppose the government of the king. But the letters bringing that intelligence added further, that the loyal Viziers, and the greater part of the citizens, were prepared to resist those insurgents, whose intention it was to attack the province of Jaen, and to pour their rebellious bands over all the Comarcas of that region.

These disturbances caused much grief to the King Abdallah, who feared that his son Muhamad would find means to arouse all the districts of Xeres and Sidonia to

rebellion,—the Walies of those cities being his uncles, and having already proved themselves favourable to his pretensions. He therefore dispatched another of his sons, Abderahman, subsequently called Almudafar,* to the scene of contention, hoping that his persuasions might prevail on his elder brother, Muhamad, to return to his duty, and believing that the prudence and good advice of Abderahman would have their due effect on that proud and turbulent spirit. Abderahman immediately departed for Seville, therefore, with the purpose of speaking words of peace to his rebellous brother.

On that same day there came intelligence from Merida, to the effect that the Wali of Asisbona† had led his troops against the loyal Walies of Lamico, Alfandica, and Alfereda, who were maintaining the frontier line of the Douro. The king had then to make head against that faithless servant likewise. To punish the Wali of Alisbona, he sent the Vizier Abu Otman Obeidala Ben Muhamad Ben Algamri Ben Abi Abda, who had been the preceptor of his son Abderahman Almudafar, commanding him to take the naval force then prepared in Uelba and Oksonaba, with which he was commanded suddenly to fall on the rebellious Wali.

King Abdallah himself took his way to the siege of Toledo; but before he could reach that city he received advices from Merida, to the effect that Suleiman Ben Anis Ben Albaga, Cadi of that place, had risen against the Wali of the same, and had driven him from the city, amidst the wildest uproar and confusion of the populace, who are ever ready to take active part in every outbreak. Without losing a moment, the king then turned his face towards the new scene of disorder, and entered Merida when he was least expected. The Cadi, surprised and alarmed, came to throw himself at the feet of the king, and laid his head on the ground before him; when Abdallah, moved by his natural clemency, consented to spare his life, and did but throw him into prison; nay, a few days afterwards, considering that Suleiman Ben

* Called by some historians Almutaraf, which signifies "triumphant," or "victorious," as does Almudafar.—*Condé.*

† Lisbon.

Anis was very young, was endowed with many good qualities, and was, moreover, the son of a man who had performed important services to the state, he restored him, unconditionally, to liberty, and eventually conferred on him the office of Vizier; when this Suleiman ended by becoming a truly faithful servant of his master, as well as one of the most respected inhabitants of Cordova.

The king then continued his way to the city of Toledo, where he pressed the siege with increased vigour, at the same time that he kept in check the rebellious traitor Aben Hafsun Ben Arius, whose troops were in action on various parts of the Comarca.

At this time a body of seditious men made an attempt to obtain possession of Cordova; but the generals who had been left there, with the aid of Muhamad Ben Said Ben Muza Ben Hodeira, who was Prefect of Police, and a zealous servant of his sovereign, found means to prevent the populace from mingling in the tumult, and having seized the authors of the confusion, he impaled them without further delay, as a warning no less than as a punishment.

Being anxious to bring the affair of the rebel Hafsun to its conclusion, and to extinguish the fire which he had kindled in the realm, Abdallah now assembled his whole force for that purpose, the insurgent chief having previously continued, by various movements and stratagems of war, to avoid coming to a decided engagement with the royal troops. At length the cavalry of Cordova succeeded in joining that of Aben Hafsun in certain plains that lie along the shores of the Tagus; and the Andalusians fought with so much valour that they defeated the people of Eastern Spain, and compelled them to a disorderly flight, although they too conducted themselves with remarkable steadiness and bravery. Night alone put an end to the pursuit, and many of the rebels were drowned in the Tagus as they sought to escape the swords of their enemies. After this engagement few days then passed, for some considerable time, without obstinate skirmishes.

Now the king was unwilling to incur the delay of attempting to regain the strong places held by the partizans of Aben Hafsun Ben Arius, and remaining thus in the open field, was compelled to have a train of baggage mules continually

following the camp, with provisions and other necessaries. One day, when the cavalry of Abdallah was engaged in sanguinary combat with a large body of the enemy, the droves of the animals thus charged with the baggage were making halt in a valley near the shores of the Tagus, when a strong company of the rebel horse fell upon the baggage train, seizing tents, provisions, and every other munition there provided, with which they retired to the fortress of Zurita, also on the shores of the Tagus. The combat being at an end, Abdallah's troops were found to be destitute of provisions; and this occurrence induced the king to change his plans, and give his attention to the reduction of the forts, some of which it became imperatively needful that he should hold at his disposition. In a few days, therefore, he obtained possession of those of Uclis and Huebde, which he did without much difficulty; but that of Puli continuing a rash and obstinate resistance, was taken by storm, when all who remained within it were put to the sword. The royal troops subsequently made themselves masters of other forts with but little loss on their side; and that done, Abdallah again turned his thoughts to the siege of Toledo. The most experienced and practised, as well as the most resolved of the rebel force, were now serving as the garrison of that city, and all the leaders were reported to have formed the firm determination of maintaining themselves in their strong and well-appointed fortress.

CHAP. LXII.—CONTINUATION OF THE INTESTINE WAR.

SOME few days after the events narrated above, King Abdallah received advices from his son Abderahman, in which that prince communicated the unwelcome intelligence of his total failure in the negociations which he had hoped to effect with his brother Muhamad. The latter had, indeed, refused all communication with Abderahman, whom he would not permit to enter the city of Seville; nor would he make any reply to the letters sent him by that Prince, who declared himself to be in great anxiety for the result. He had found that Muhamad was constantly receiving ac-

cessions of strength from the number of seditious and disaffected men who were joining themselves to his banners; and Abderahman had reason, as he furthermore acquainted his father, to fear that his brother's intention was to proceed against Cordova. He added that the district of Jaen had been already thrown into a state of disquietude by the partizans of Muhamad; and he recommended the king to remit the care of maintaining the siege of Toledo to his generals, while he should repair at once to Cordova, where Abderahman would receive him, and where they could then together concert and take counsel respecting the means to be adopted for reducing Muhamad to the obedience he owed his father and sovereign.

These letters were the cause of deep grief to Abdallah, and making the best dispositions for continuing the siege of Toledo, he departed in all haste for Cordova. He entered the city without having given notice of his arrival, and was thus not received nor met with acclamations by the people. Abdallah then made arrangements with his son Abderahman Almudafar as to what should be done in relation to the war which he was now compelled to make against Muhamad; and they ultimately decided on the measures to be taken for expelling the disobedient prince from Seville, for taking possession of and assuring the tranquillity of that district, and for punishing the rebels who had so long disquieted and ravaged the province.

The intelligence now received frem Lusitania was meanwhile less discouraging; the valour and prudence of the Vizier Abu Otman Obeidala El Gamri had prevailed against the rebellious Wali of Alisbona, whom Abu Otman had taken prisoner, immediately cutting off his head, and sending it for public display to Cordova. The Alcaides who had taken part with the defeated rebel had also been subdued; those of Xilbe, Biseo, and Colymbira, all of whom had been the partizans of Abdelwahid, Wali of Alisbona, were, like himself, taken prisoners, and their heads also were now sent to Cordova.

Meanwhile the rebel Hafsun Ben Arius, well acquainted with the many disquietudes of the kingdom, and the troubles still continuing to prevail in Andalusia, became inflated with the hopes infused into his heart by that state of things, and

despatched Obeidala Ben Umia, called Asalat, to ravage the Comarcas of Jaen. This general, a crafty and dangerous man, united his forces to those commanded by Suar Ben Hamdum El Caisi, who led a body of seven thousand men, and together they took possession of Somoutan in the district of Jaen, whence they continued their operations. They succeeded after a certain time in occupying Cazlona, with some other of the fortresses in the Albureghalas or Alpujarras, and all their troops they sustained by the plunder and desolation of the country. The followers of Yahye Ben Suquela, Ameer of the Aiarabes, united themselves to these rebels, as did the faction of the Maulidines, which was a very powerful one, on account of the great riches possessed by the chiefs thereof, these enabling them to keep in their pay a body of Arabs and Christians which was not less than six thousand strong.

Against these insurgents the king despatched Ghaad Ben Abdelgafir, Wali of the district of Jaen, to whom the rebels offered battle, and the contest was an obstinate one; but the Wali of Jaen was finally defeated, with the loss of seven thousand men, Ghaad himself, with many of his principal officers, falling into the hands of the enemy, by whom they were carried prisoners to the new fortresses of Garnata, on the west of Medina Elvira. Animated by this advantage, the insurgent troops then extended their incursions over the whole province: they occupied Huesca, Jaen, Raya, Archidona, and the entire district from Elvira to Calatrava. This unfortunate battle was fought at the end of the year 276.

When King Abdallah received the advices reporting these disastrous events, he made a vow that he would never return to his capital until he had made an end of those rebellious hordes. Having assembled the people of Andalusia and the cavalry of his guard, he confided the command of the foot-soldiers and cross-bow men to Abderahman Ben Badr Ahmed, a general well experienced in mountain warfare, and who had served in the Sierras of Ronda and throughout the Alpujarras. This portion of the royal forces proceeded to the district of Jaen, and the rebel leader, Suar Ben Hamdum came boldly forth to their encounter; but the troops of the king defeated those of the rebels, who fled in disorder. Suar Ben Hamdum, being wounded, could not keep pace with his people, and having been recognised by certain among the

royal troops, was brought captive into the presence of the king Abdallah, who commanded that his head should be struck off, which was done without delay, and the head was sent to Cordova with the news of that victory. The king then occupied the city of Jaen and that of Loja, which he ordered his engineers to fortify. These things occurred in the commencement of the year 277. Abu Meruan Ben Hayan affirms that in this battle, which was called the battle of Medina Elvira, there died twelve thousand men; and he adds that among them was Yahye Ben Suquela, Ameer of the Alarabes.

Said Ben Suleiman Ben Gudi, who was attached to the party of Jezid, the son of Yahye Ben Suquela, Ameer of the Arab bands, has described the battles of the period in measured lines, and he eulogises the general Suar Ben Hamdum El Caisi in those that follow:—

1. Already hath the dust of our feet inspired terror into the hearts of our foes. The whole heaven hath become darkened, and the vast cloud uprises itself with menacing frown.

2. See! from the power of our lances they turn in their fear. Trembling they show us their backs, and the hot sword quenches its thirst in the blood of the flying!

3. Ah, the dark drops! Rain all crimson! it moistens the dust of the plains. How they fly! Hill and valley are all too close for them. Yea, too close! and we bring them now back, breathless, and loaded with chains. See! see! the pale slaves, how they shake at our gaze, how the fears of their hearts blanch their cheeks as they throng the dark way 'neath the feet of our horses and slaves!

4. Ask of the hero Ben Hamdum how went the glad fight? Suar shall tell how the edge of our swords mowed the heads and tore forth from the turbans their jewels of pride.

5. Ask of Alhamrah's brave son, when the moment had come to his wish, how he plunged on the ranks of the foe, as do eagles that rush from their rocks,—nay, as mountains that fall on the plains, and turn all to the dust of the grave.

6. Thus, thus hath God done to the false ones that fled from our banners. Over all came the dark wheel of Fate that none living shall flee, and behold they are not! E'en

the trace of their lives is no more; they are now as they never had been.

7. Us and ours did they combat with wiles, with the craft of the coward and slave. Horsemen and footmen alike, with vile arts and machines they assailed us.

8. But the sons of Adnan and of Cahtan! what marvels they work! Their leaders are lions in fury that pounce on their prey,—red lightning the flash of their swords! And the guerdon they seek, those high chiefs! 'Tis the glory that hallows the brave! See! see! 'tis the noblest of Cais —'tis Ben Hamdum whose blood-dropping blade now flashes aloft through the host!

10. And mark! with the noblest and highest he hath sprung to the summit of all!

The same author composed, likewise, these metrical stanzas which follow, and which he wrote on the death of Suar Ben Hamdum, who fell, as we have said, at the battle of Elvira:—

Verse 1. The sword of the hero lies broken! Ye hills of Elvira, ye saw him lie low!

2. Yea, the weapon whose flash hath brought tears to the brightest of eyes; yea, the lance that hath clothed you in mourning, ye fairest of maids, they lie broken and low.

3. When he came, to the noble and lowly he presented one cup,—to the master and slave did he give it. That cup! 'twas of death! for his weapon ne'er failed.

4. He hath gone, and with him there fell thousands—yea, and those of our best; for thousands avail not to fill up the place of the lost, when the lost is as Suar Ben Hamdum, the pride of his race.

5. And of ours shall one lance be but poorly repaid by the foe with their thousand,—but poorly! The fight is ne'er equal between us, save when we take tens for each life that we give.

6. But we quench the fierce drought of our swords in the blood of their hearts, and the bright sheen departs in the river of crimson that flows as we ride o'er the slain.

7. Or say that dark fortune hath frowned, and hath humbled the ranks of the brave. Do *their* columns not waver? Yea do they! The craven foe falls to the dust!

8. Now hear Abí Sidqui: "Of slaves doth the blood never rise up in redness.* Vile fluid, in vain is it spilt!"

9. But the blood of our brethren cries vengeance, though deep in the grave!

After the death of Suar Ben Hamdum, the rebels made a Syrian of Quinsarina their general. This man, named Said Ben Gudi, was very bold and daring, but wanted discretion. Full of confidence in the bravery of his well-tried troops, he rashly ventured into the plains and valleys around Garnata and Loja; nor did the army of King Abdallah fail to profit by the opportunity thus presented. They attacked the rebels with infinite resolution, and having totally defeated them, pursued their flying bands with an eagerness that resulted in the most fearful carnage, and left the field strewed with dead. The victory of the royal troops was complete, and the leader of the rebels, after having pierced many of the king's people with his lance, and destroyed large numbers of them, fell wounded into the hands of the soldiery. He was then brought to the king, who commanded that he should be put to death; but first the executioners put out his eyes with hot irons, and it was not until the third day after the unhappy man had suffered this atrocious cruelty that his head was taken off. It was then sent to Cordova with the intelligence of the victory.

The remains of the rebel army were nevertheless far from being discouraged. They gathered together at Elvira, and chose for their leader a brave man of illustrious birth, called Muhamad Ben Adheha Ben Abdelatif El Hamdani, of Persian origin, and lord of Hisn Alhama. This general, less enterprising than his predecessor, took shelter in the wilds of the Sierras; and, concealed within the defiles of the rocks, he laboured to recover and restore his people from the effects of the heavy disaster they had sustained; avoiding all encounter for that time with the troops of King Abdallah.

* The poet here alludes to an Arabian superstition, according to which blood, if noble, when spilt and unavenged, rises up redly and with an aspect of freshness, however long it may have been dried, when they whose duty it was to avenge it appear. This appearance of renewed life in the blood they call *Tullat*, and they consider it to be a voice demanding vengeance.—*Condé.*

The latter had at the same period a general in the field called Ishac Ben Ibrahim El Ocaili. He was a leader of the cavalry, and was as remarkable for eloquence as bravery, insomuch that he animated his troops as well by his voice as his example. This officer held the field with various fortune against Aben Hafsun Ben Arius; he drove the forces of that rebel from many of the forts of which they had obtained possession, and, among other places, took the city and fortress of Montixon, which he raised from its ruins, strongly fortified, and defended for a long time against all the attempts of the insurgents, keeping the whole district in his hands until the reign of the king Anasir Abderahman.

Now the Wali Abderahman Ben Badr had counselled king Abdallah to return to Cordova, whence he might still cause the war to be carried on against Toledo with increased zeal, while at the same time his generals might appease the disquietudes prevailing in the Comarcas of Seville; Abderahman declaring that a mere horde of bandits and rebels ought not to be permitted to detain the king and the flower of his cavaliers from the capital. On this advice, therefore, Abdallah now acted; he left a force which he considered sufficient to hold in check the unruly bands which had taken refuge in their mountain fastnesses, and returned to Cordova.

Now the rebel troops which had retired to the Sierras were at this time suffering the want of all things, even to the most indispensable necessaries, and many of their bands dispersed in consequence of the privations thus suffered. A general of these hordes, Abdallah Ben Asaliat, seeing this state of things, betook himself to Huesca, in which city was the leader of them all, even Aben Hafsun Ben Arius, with whom Abdallah Ben Asaliat remained for some time.

Prince Abderahman Almudafar was meanwhile fighting with varied fortunes against the rebels of Sidonia, Xeres, and Astaba, having for his most dangerous opponent his own brother, the Prince Muhamad; the principal part of whose force consisted of admirably organized and carefully selected cavalry; his uncles also, with other sons of King Abdallah, having repaired to the camp of Prince Muhamad, with all the troops they commanded.

One of those attached to the cause of Prince Muhamad

was the General Ibrahim Ben Hegag El Lahmi, who kept the Comarca of Seville with five hundred horse. This Ibrahim caused Coreib Ben Otman to be put to death, at Seville, because he had opposed his rebellious designs, and had persuaded the citizens not to depart from the fidelity and obedience which they owed to King Abdallah. Ibrahim furthermore inflicted a similar fate on the brother of Coreib, for the same cause. There were, moreover, men at this time in Seville by whom the most offensive calumnies were written against all who remained true to their king; these incendiaries accusing the noblest citizens of Cordova, and sparing none but Bedr El Wasif, who was one of Abdallah's most trusted servants. Nay, they, ultimately fell upon Ibrahim himself, who had been the first to excite them against others,—making use of his own letters and writings to effect his disgrace. These men were Abu Omar Ben Abdrabihi, and Muhamad Ben Yahye El Calfat, a person whose genius was equalled only by his malignity.

CHAP. LXIII.—Of the victory obtained by Abderahman Almudafar, and the imprisonment of the princes Muhamad and Alcasim.

When King Abdallah arrived at Cordova, he dispatched the cavalry he had brought with him, and the services of which he did not require in the capital, to his son Abderahman Almudafar; and with that opportune reinforcement, the prince set forth to seek his rebellious brothers. No long time elapsed before Seville and Carmona were in the hands of Abderahman; and having made the best arrangements in his power for the security of those cities, he then followed the army of Muhamad.

Sharp skirmishes were fought between detached bodies of the contending hosts; and these at length became a general battle, in which appeared the noblest and bravest cavaliers of Andalusia, those of Xeres, Arcos, and Sidonia standing ranged in the field against those of Cordova, Ecija, Carmona, and Seville,—a very grievous and deplorable sight. The steadiness and valour of so many brave nobles

caused the strife to be fearfully obstinate; and vast numbers died on both parts. But the troops of Almudafar would not permit the name of their illustrious leader to be tarnished that day; and the army of Prince Muhamad was defeated and broken, notwithstanding the heroic valour of their young general, of his cavaliers, and of the whole force beneath his banners. Many Alcaides died fighting on that stubbornly-contested field. Muhamad himself performed prodigies of valour; but his horse fell dead beneath him; and the prince, so grievously wounded that he could not lift himself from the ground, was brought to the presence of his brother Abderahman, who commanded that every possible care should be taken of him, and the needful attentions given to his wounds, but directed also that he should be kept under a strong guard. A similar fate befel the Prince Alcasim, brother of King Abdallah, and uncle of the princes; who being brought to his nephew Almudafar, was also placed in safe keeping, by the orders of that general, but with the further command that all attention should be paid to him, and his wounds carefully dressed.

Abderahman then passed on to Seville; where he calmed the unquiet spirits still rife in that city, by the intelligence of his victory. He then dispatched Couriers to his father, with letters describing the cruel combat sustained, and concluding with an account of the victory he had won; he furthermore informed the king that his son and brother, both severely wounded, were in prison; intelligence of so mingled a character, that while Abdallah could not but rejuice at the termination of the civil war, he was yet constrained to grieve even more earnestly for the loss of so many brave and noble Moslemah, to say nothing of the condition in which were then lying his own son and his brother. Prince Muhamad died, in fact, but a few days after; and although there are not wanting those who affirm that he was poisoned, by order of his brother Abderahman, or rather that poison was given to him by his brother at the command of his father, yet this is not in the slightest degree probable, and those writers who assure us that he died of his many wounds, and of the depression of spirit by which these were accompanied, are, in all respects, most worthy of credit. The day of his death was the tenth of the Moon

Xawal, in the year 282. The unhappy prince had then attained his twenty-eighth year. He left a son four years old, who was called Abderahman, and whom God had reserved for great things, as we shall see hereafter. In the Court this child was called "the Son of Muhamad El Mactul," or the murdered, because the malignity of certain courtiers persisted in declaring that his father had not died of his wounds, although it is certain that he did so die.

In this same year of 282, there arose a great enmity between the General and Vizier Abdelmelic Ben Abdallah and the Wali Omar, son of Haxem Ben Abdelaziz, and this was so much embittered by certain rivalries and resentments, that those nobles could find no other issue for their dispute than a mutual defiance to the field; wherefore they went forth to the combat, when Omar Ben Haxem was killed by Abdelmelic the son of Abdallah. Not many days after that event, Almutaraf, son of King Muhamad, who for his noble qualities was as it were the prince of the youth of that time, avenged the death of Omar, inasmuch as that he slew Abdelmelic Ben Abdallah at a place not two miles from Seville. The government of the Wali Abdelmelic was then given to Ahmed, son of Haxem Ben Abdelaziz, and brother of that Omar whose death had thus found an avenger, as we have said. But to Meruan, the son of Abdelmelic, King Abdallah also gave an office, conferring upon him the charge of Alcahib or Secretary, which had been held by his father, who had fulfilled the duties thereof much to the satisfaction of his sovereign.

In Ramazan of this same year, the Prince Almutaraf himself died a violent death, being then in his twenty-fourth year. He was assassinated in one of the streets of the city by night, and suspicion fell upon Meruan Ben Abdelmelic for certain causes which were known to exist, in addition to the enmity arising out of the affair of the challenge; wherefore, not being able to clear himself in the minds of his judges, he was condemned to perpetual imprisonment, and so remained until the year 284, when he died in his prison.

On the third day of the moon of Giumada Postrera, in the year 283, there died at Cordova the Vizier Temam Ben Amri of the Alcamas, he being then in the ninety-sixth

year of his age. Temam Ben Amri had been Vizier to King Muhamad, and to his sons Almondhir and Abdallah: he wrote the History of the Conquest of Spain in verse, with the exploits of the Walies and Kings of that country, and the description of their wars, from the first landing of Taric Ben Zeyad to the last years of the King Abderahman Ben Alhakem. He was born in the year 194.

Now the General Said Ben Suleiman Ben Gudi, of an ancient and noble family of Quinsarina, had for some time been attached to the party of the Maulidines. He was a cavalier of high merit, and of him it was said that in his person were united the ten qualities which distinguish the noble and generous cavalier; which qualities are, integrity, valour, knightly honour, gentle courtesy, poetry, eloquence, strength, skill in the use of the lance, readiness with the sword, and dexterity in drawing the bow. About the period now in question Said Ben Suleiman defied to the combat the son of Hafsun Ben Arias, even Calib, but the latter did not come forth to answer his challenge. Wherefore, some time after, Said encountering him in the field, attacked and threw him from the saddle, when he fell to the ground helpless, and Said would have killed him had not Calib been defended and liberated by his people. This his enmity with Calib Ben Hafsun caused Said to return to the obedience which he owed his sovereign; and entering the service of the king, Abdallah gave him a command in the Cora of Elvira, but he was there treacherously assassinated by some of his own followers. This happened in the moon Dylcada of the year 284. The cause of Said Ben Suleiman's death is said to have been certain verses offensive to the house of Meruan which he had composed, and which commence as follows:—

"Oh Sons of Meruan, how distinguished are your coursers in the flight! If they do not move so deftly to the battle yet none can equal the swiftness of their foot, in the moment when a timid heart turns the shoulders of the bearer to the sight of the foe. Great are ye in the flight, oh sons of Meruan, and swift are the feet of your steeds," &c. &c.

El Asedi, an Arabian poet of Elvira, made the verses which follow as a sepulchral inscription for Said Ben Suleiman.

"Here dost Thou lie, who, to the poor and needy
Wast ever a sure refuge. Son of Gudi,
Deep was thy shade when summer suns were glowing,
And warm the shelter of thine open arms
When keen the winter blasts were howling round us.
Now, see! thou hast thyself but these few branches
To shield thy head; yet rose and jasmine twine
Their breathing blossoms round them, and shall fail
Never while blooms the field, while decks the grove
Its wealth of leaf, and while the crystal brook
Lacks not its silvery stores. Since the sun shone
Nor men nor genii yet have seen a nobler
Than he who here lies sleeping. Said! oh, Said,
For thee mine eyes rain tears upon the path
Marked out by myrtles to thy dark abode."

In the year 285 there was a great sterility of the earth and a grievous famine, insomuch that hunger was general throughout Spain and Africa, and the sufferings of all came at length to this, that the poor ate each other. Thereupon followed a pestilence, when the mortality was so great that after having long been compelled to cast many corpses into one grave, there were at length not even men sufficient for the burial of those who died, seeing that those yet alive had not strength enough to dig graves for the departed. Yea, men who found themselves to be dying were known to drag themselves to the burial places and there lie down, in the hope that some one might then throw their remains into the next opened grave; and when this was done it was without the due ablutions, nor was there any to utter the prayer.

CHAP. LXIV.—Of the irruption made by the rebels into Gallicia, and the battle of Zamora.

When the troubles disquieting Andalusia had been set at rest, King Abdallah placed new governors in Xeres, Astaba, and Sidonia. The government of Seville he would fain have given to his brother Alcasim, but that desire was opposed by his son Almudafar and other Walies, who reminded Abdallah of the obstinacy with which Alcasim had supported the rebellion of Prince Mohamad; wherefore he was left in

forgetfulness, and thenceforward lived almost in the manner of a captive. The government of Jaen was given to Abdelwalid, who had served as general on the frontier against Aben Hafsun and the rebels of the mountains.

Now there had attached himself to the party of Hafsun a general called Ahmad Ben Moavia Ben Alkithi, known also as Abulcasim: he was of the Maulidines, had a certain degree of relationship to the royal family, and did not fail to support the vain pretensions of the rebellious princes; but when these had been wholly done away with, he sought the alliance of the rebel chief, Hafsun Ben Arias. This pretender considered the district of Toledo and Talavera to be his own; and desiring to extend his frontier line on the side of Gallicia, he made incursions on those Comarcas.

King Abdallah was at that time at peace with the king of the Christians of Gallicia, and in the security of that peace the maintenance of the frontier was somewhat neglected by both the sovereigns; wherefore the general Abulcasim made an irruption on the country with a large force both of foot and horse, entering by Zamora and plundering the towns, as well Christian as Moslemah. The Alcaides of the frontier then made these things known to Abdallah and the King of Gallicia alike, excusing themselves in the matter of those incursions, which they could not prevent, and which were not countenanced by the good and honourable Moslemah, who were duly obedient to their lord, but only by the rebels and disaffected.

As to this Ahmed Ben Alkithi, called Abulcasim, himself, he wrote in a vain inflated spirit to the King of the Christians, insolently threatening him, and declaring that if he did not make himself a Mosleman, or submit to become his tributary, he would not delay to drive him from his territories, and would make him die an evil death if he fell into his hands.

We find it related that the force assembled by this leader was not less than sixty thousand men; he had numerous troops from Barbary in his pay, with bands from many parts of the north and west of Africa, from Toledo and its confines, and from Eastern Spain.

The Christians of Gallicia were not slow to resent the offence they had received; they drew their might together,

coming in great force to the encounter of the general Ahmed, and these two vast armies met in the vicinity of Zamora. Here they joined battle with infinite fury on both sides, and the fight was maintained during four days. On the last day, or as some authors say on the first, the hired Arrayaces from Barbary abandoned the field; but the people from the Comarcas of Toledo and those of Eastern Spain maintained the struggle with great steadiness, as did their general Ahmed, who lost his life on that place and died fighting bravely.

With the fall of their general the Moslemah lost all order and fled in confusion, when the Christians made a fearful slaughter among them. In the flight was slain Abderahman Ben Moavia, an illustrious general of Tortosa. The Christian forces cut off many heads, which they placed on the turrets of Zamora and over the gates of that city, and that defeat of the Moslemah troops was celebrated among the Christians by the name of the day of Zamora. This battle, and the rout suffered therein by the Mosleman rebels, took place in the year 288.

Towards the end of the year 287, there died in Cordova the learned Alfaqui of Andalusia, Ibrahim Ben Nesar, Cadi of the Aljama. His interment was signalized by the great concourse of those who were present, and the people remained in the burial place the greater part of the night. On the seventh day following that of his funeral there was an oration read at his tomb in praise of his virtues. The king appointed Nadhr Ben Salema El Kelebi to be Cadi of the Aljama of Cordova; but he begged permission to decline that charge in favour of his brother Muhamad Ben Salema, who was appointed in his place accordingly.

CHAP. LXV.—Of the conventions made with the king of Gallicia, and other events.

At this time it was affirmed in Cordova that the Wali of the frontier, Ishac El Ocaili, who had long held the fortress of Montixon against the rebels, and had powerfully withstood those bands in their various irruptions, had now made common cause with the insurgents, with whom he was living in

good understanding, holding frequent intercourse with them, and giving them aid, for which cause they had permitted him to remain quietly in possession of his fortress and government. This was at the commencement of the year 289.

There prevailed at the same time a considerable amount of discontent among the people, on account of the slaughter made at Zamora; many among the more fervid followers of Islam declared that the Mosleman people ought to seize their arms as one man, for the purpose of taking vengeance for the blood of their brethren thus spilt. But the king Abdallah, far from yielding to the outcries of these fanatics, who would have had him make an agreement with the rebel Calib Ben Hafsun, and declare a war of fire and sword against the Christians, sent the general Obeidala El Gamri, who was then at Alisbona, to propose a treaty to the King of Gallicia,* desiring to maintain his good intelligence with that sovereign, and to confirm the conventions then in force between them.

The Wali Obeidala did as he was commanded accordingly, fulfilling his mission to the letter, and disposing the king of Gallicia to a reciprocal friendship with his lord, as the latter had desired: he completed his embassy moreover by obtaining from the Christian king a promise to make war, without ceasing, on all the rebels who should approach his frontier.

These negotiations diminished the credit of Abdallah with the austere and very religious Moslemah of the Aljamas of Andalusia, and the boldness of the Imaums and Alchatibes arrived to such a degree in some of the cities that they even omitted the name of the king in the Chotba or public prayer, as they might have done if he had been a bad Moslemah or excommunicate. This was more especially the case in Seville, where the disloyal opinions current respecting the king, and the boldness of the omission here alluded to, were encouraged by the insolent discourses of Prince Alcasim, brother of Abdallah. Informed of this state of things,

* This was at that time Alphonso the Third or the Great. The kings whom we (the Spaniards) call of Leon, Asturias, and Gallicia, the Arabs call of Gallicia only; those whom we call kings of Navarre, Sobrarbe, and Catalonia, they call "Kings of the Christians of the Mountains of Afranc."—*Condé.*

the king despatched the Vizier Abdelwahib, a man of prudence equal to his distinguished bravery, commanding him to ascertain the exact truth of the reports thus current; when the Vizier discovered that not only was all true which the king had heard, but that there was much more yet remaining untold, seeing that in place of the name of Abdallah was now inserted that of Moctesidbilah, Caliph of the East, while Prince Alcasim was declaring publicly that the revenues of the Azaque, or tithe, ought not to be paid to King Abdallah, seeing that he was a bad Mosleman and a disbeliever, who employed the Tenths against the children of the Faith.

Being thus made acquainted with all the facts, the king commanded his vizier to arrest Prince Alcasim, who being fully convicted of these treasons was put to death in his prison, by means of a drink prepared for that purpose; an event which took place in the year 290. Prince Alcasim had considerable genius for poetry, and was known by the name of El Gurlan.

For the seditious and dangerous discourses here described, King Abdallah banished many of the most distinguished Alimes; and the illustrious Alfaqui Zacaria Ben Alchitab of Tutila fled into the East on that account. He was in high repute for the exemplary manner of his life as well as for his great attainments, insomuch that he brought honour to his native land even in the uttermost regions of the earth.

The followers and partizans of the rebel Hafsun Ben Arius did not lose the opportunity presented by this state of things for promoting their views; and while his troops were maintaining the war against those of the king, Calib Omar Ben Hafsun himself, who was abiding in disguise at Balay, a place about twenty miles from Cordova, even ventured to enter the capital. This he did with great secrecy in the year 293; but he was discovered by a singular accident.

The vigilance of the king's viziers had made him acquainted with the fact that among the seditious persons by whom he had been most eagerly calumniated was a noble Xeque, who, having held the office of Cadi of Merida, had been once forgiven by Abdallah for treason and rebellion while in that office, on account of his youth and general

good qualities. This was Suleiman Ben Albaga of Mequineza. He had published certain satirical works, which were sufficiently clever, and in which the king was indicated under the opprobrious name of the Himaro,* but in a manner too clear to be mistaken; many imprecations were launched in these verses against those who led and conducted this Himaro, alluding therein to the principal ministers and counsellors of the king.

From one hand to another this satire was at length brought home to Suleiman Ben Albaga, and when Abdallah learned that he was the author, he commanded him to be brought to his presence, when he said to him—"By Allah, friend Suleiman, my benefits conferred upon thee have fallen upon a bad soil, and it is not at thy hands that I have merited such blame, or rather such praises; for since these evil words come from thee, they may be called either one or the other. Seeing, then, that the mildness and favour I have shown thee avail so little, I ought now to make thee feel the weight of my just anger, so that whereas thou hast hitherto had cause to censure me for too much forbearance, thou mightest have some reason to speak ill of me as revengeful and cruel. Yet it shall not be so. Thou hast nothing to fear for thy life; but thou shalt repeat these thy verses in my presence whensoever I may command thee to do so; the esteem in which I hold them being proved by the fact that thou shalt pay one thousand doubloons for every one of them. If, then, thou hadst laid still more upon the Himaro, his burthen would have been all the more profitable to the receiver of this fine, as it would have been more costly to thee."

Filled with confusion at the mildness with which his offence had been treated, Suleiman laid his head at the feet of his sovereign, and implored pardon in such terms that Abdallah could not refuse to grant it. The poet thereupon inspired with gratitude for so much goodness, and being aware of the fact that Aben Hafsun Ben Arius was concealed in Cordova, revealed that secret. Then the Prefect of Police, in his fear lest Suleiman should repent and give

* This word is believed to intimate a beast of burthen, but one used for the vilest of purposes,—as, for example, the transport of manure: it is not in general use.—TR.

notice to the partizans of that rebel of the danger in which he was placed, secured the person of the poet, whose imprisonment alarmed the friends of Hafsun, and knowing how deep in the secrets and machinations of their chief Suleiman was, they recommended Calíb to fly without delay. At the moment when he should have been seized, therefore, he disappeared, and though many persons, suspected of disaffection, were arrested and put to the torture in the hope of discovering his retreat, yet nothing was elicited except the certainty that he had been in Cordova and had escaped in the disguise of a mendicant, begging from door to door.

In the year 294 died one of the wisest men of his time, Ibrahim Ben Iza El Moredi, of Ecija, namely; a person of infinite sagacity, and one who was frequently consulted by Abdallah in difficult emergencies. Alhasan Ben Sargibil, of Badalyos, a man greatly celebrated for his erudition, also died in that year.

At this time there occurred a very singular event; it is related by Abu Abdallah, El Homaidi of Cordova, and by Abdelmelic Ben Bascual, as a proof of the high estimation in which the virtuous and praiseworthy life of the wise Alfaqui Baqui Ben Machlad had caused him to be held by the people of Cordova. They tell us that on a certain day there came a poor woman to Ben Machlad, and said to him—"It is now a long time since a son of mine has been captive in the power of the Christians; but my means are so small that I have not been able to pay his ransom, neither can I find any one who will buy of me a poor little dwelling which I possess, and would gladly sell for that purpose; but even if I should succeed in selling my house, to whom can I confide for taking the steps necessary to secure my son's restoration to liberty? For thought of these things I can take no rest, neither day nor night."

The old Alfaqui did his best to console the woman, telling her that she should put her trust in Allah, whose divine goodness would finally send a remedy for all her evils. The woman thereupon entreated that Baqui Ben Machlad would pray God to do so much for her, and he promised her the prayer she desired, bidding her return to her house and be of good courage. The poor mother then departed, and not without hope, when the Xeque, moving his lips, implored

the Almighty to console that grieving widow as only He could do.

A few days afterwards, the woman came to the Alfajui bringing him her son redeemed from his captivity, and the youth related the manner in which he had been set free. He said that being captive with other Moslemah to certain Christian nobles, he was placed with his companions in the charge of a man who led them to their daily labour in the fields, all bearing chains with rings of iron on their ankles; he added, that on a certain day, as he worked at a farm-house with the man who guarded him, these chains suddenly fell from his ankles to the earth; and the day and hour of that event being examined, were found to accord with those wherein the poor woman had sought consolation from the Alfaqui.

The guard, seeing the chains thus fall, cried aloud, and asked the captive—"Wherefore hast thou thus broken thy chains?" but the youth replied—"I have not broken them, they have fallen from my feet." He was then led before his lord, and the chains were refastened to his limbs; but he had not walked many paces when they fell again to the earth. Amazed at an occurrence so extraordinary, the Christian master consulted his Monks, and they enquired of the youth—"Hast thou perchance a mother?" to which he replying that he had, the Monks then said—"Without doubt God hath heard the prayers of thy mother, and since He gives thee thy liberty, we may not dare longer to deprive thee thereof, or to hold thee in chains." That said, they sent their captive to the Moslemah frontier and set him free.

Hearing this, Baqui said to the mother and son—"All things are the work of God; to Him, therefore, give ye thanks."

In the year 295, there died at Saragossa, Muhamad Ben Suleiman Ben Telid of Huesca, Cadi of the Aljama of that city, and having previously held the same appointment in his native place of Huesca. He was a very learned man, of great integrity, who never received a gift from any man, nor would accept an invitation to any feast or festival. His bier was accompanied to the grave by all the people of the city. His successor was Ibrahim Ben Harun Ben Sohli, who was also an Alfajui of much learning and very praise-

worthy life; but Ibrahim did not survive his election to that office more than a year.

When Calib Aben Hafsun Ben Arius, escaping from Cordova as we have said, arrived in the Comarcas of Toledo, where his army then was, he began to make incursions on the district of Calatrava; but being met by the Vizier, Abu Othman Obeidala Ben Gamri, he was defeated by that general in several skirmishes. Abu Othman likewise obtained possession of numerous forts previously occupied by the troops of Omar Calib Hafsun. In the year 296 there was a pitched battle between them, and in this Abu Othman utterly destroyed the cavalry of Calib, making a terrible carnage among his foot-soldiers also, and compelling him to take refuge in Toledo. There, and in such fortresses as yet remained to him, the rebel chief was fain to keep himself retired for more than three years, during all which time he never dared to risk a battle in the open field.

In the year 297, there died at Cordova the beforementioned Obeidala Ben Yahye El Laithi, a man of prodigious erudition. He had studied in the schools of Africa,* Egypt, Syria, and the Iraks, and among other writings he left very precious histories or biographies of the most renowned Alfajuies and Alcaides. In the same year there also died, and likewise in Cordova, that Suleiman Ben Harun El Rayeni, of Toledo, who is known as Abu Ayub, and who wrote a universal history.

In the year 298, Prince Abderahman Almudafar took the rebel, Ibrahim Ben Alhegag, prisoner; the troops of that leader were surprised by those of the king, and to save themselves from being all put to the edge of the sword, they delivered their general, bound, into the hands of Abderahman, who caused him to be decapitated as the due reward of his treason and of the numerous atrocities which he had committed.

* It will be remarked here and hereafter, that the name of Africa is applied by the Arabian writers to a small portion only of that quarter of the world which we now call by that name; "The Province of Africa," as cited by the Arabic geographers, being merely one among the many composing the dominions of the Almoravide Princes and other Dynasties ruling in those regions, of whom we shall hereafter have occasion to treat.—Tr.

CHAP. LXVI.—Of the retirement of the wali Abu Othman, and other events occurring in Cordova.

In that same year of 298, the General Obeidala Ben Gamri, who had gained so many victories over the rebels on the frontier, was informed that Prince Abderahman had requested from the king his father the recall of himself—Abu Othman Obeidala—from his command, and even from the government which he held in the province of Merida; but that the king had refused compliance, in consideration of the valuable services performed by the Wali whose dismissal was desired. The Prince insisted, nevertheless, saying that Abu Othman had become old, and was now in a condition better suited to the repose of private life than to the labours and efforts of war; while Abdallah replied as persistently that he would not recall his Wali until that officer should himself request dismissal. Prince Abderahman then permitting his motives to be seen, replied—"As you please, my lord, and I speak with all the respect due to the venerable years of Abu Othman, but these are more likely to be of service in the Hall of Council than in the battle field.

Being made acquainted, I say, with all these things, Abu Othman lost no time in writing to his sovereign, from whom he requested permission to resign the cares of his offices, desiring also to receive instant leave of absence, for the performance of a religious pilgrimage; all which he did that he might not disquiet the Prince, who wished for the government of Merida, and coveted the sole command of the troops led by Abu Othman; but the latter did not fail to retain a strong sense of injury, and much resented the conduct of Abderahman.

In those days there came intelligence to Cordova to the effect that the General Niam El Chalaf Ben Abi Chasib of Tutila, had died fighting in a battle with the rebels on the Eastern frontier, of which he was the general in command: he was an excellent poet, as well as very brave in arms.

When the Vizier Abu Othman Obeidala had finally retired to Cordova, King Abdallah made him captain of his

Sclavonian Guard, which was composed of troops from a foreign people, much in esteem for their bravery, fidelity, and moderation. These soldiers kept the interior of the palace; their arms were a two-handed sword, with a shield and mace of arms.

Prince Abderahman Almudafar now assumed in person the command of the forces acting against the rebel chief, Aben Hafsun Ben Arius, and commenced his enterprises against them with so much ardour, that they dared not show themselves in the field. Whatever captive of the insurgents fell into his hands he caused to be at once decapitated or done to death by the lances of his guard. He was a rigid upholder of military discipline, and that to such extremity as to be feared by his own people almost as much as by the enemy. In Cordova, meanwhile, the Wali Abu Othman Obeidala Ben Gamri began to be considered as the especial protector of the young Abderahman, son of Prince Mohamad, called El Mactul, for whom he laboured earnestly to obtain the hearts of King Abdallah, the Xeques, the Walies, and other principal personages, losing no opportunity for making manifest the sweet and estimable qualities of that fair child, who was indeed the very delight of Cordova. King Abdallah alone was careful not to display his preference too openly, lest he should cause disquietude to his son Almudafar; but it was observed that he ever listened to the praises of his grandchild with infinite complacency.

There was at this time in Cordova a native of Barbary named Suleiman Ben Venasos: he was Captain of the King's African Guard, and held also the office of Vizier, beside that he was a member of the Council of State, being a man of considerable ability and prudence, but remarkable for the severity and rude freedom of his character. One morning, as Aly Ben Ahmed relates, this Suleiman entered the presence of the king with his very long and thick beard*

* The beard was always a mark of authority and dignity, with which the Arabs did not willingly dispense. To young men in the bloom of their days it was not permitted, as being an evidence of liberty and importance not yet suited to their condition. Slaves were not allowed to leave their beards growing,—nor are they even yet suffered to do so; but, a Mosleman, being married, and having sons, could not present himself with honour and dignity, if destitute of his beard.—*Condé.*

in some disorder, and Abdallah being of joyous humour that day, began to jest with him on the subject, repeating certain satirical verses vituperating and ridiculing the use of a beard so immeasurably long. Closing the lines he had been repeating, the king said, "Dost thou hear me, Little-beard?" when the soldier replied, "Yes, I hear:" and without concealing the displeasure those verses had caused him, he continued addressing his lord with slight reverence, and said, "If some among us were not pitiable idiots, never would they appear beneath the roofs of your Alcazars, Oh ye kings: for if we could but keep out of your palaces, how many disquiets and humiliations should we not avoid! But vanity and folly lead us hither, and rarely do we perceive our mistake or deliver ourselves from the trammels thrown around us by our weakness, until we find freedom in the narrow tomb,—there alone do the bubbles of our air-bred fancies give us rest." Saying these words, he placed his hand on the earth, rose up without another syllable or any mark of courtesy, and departed to his house.

The king, displeased by that rudeness, and finding that Suleiman Ben Venasos did not again appear after the lapse of several days, deposed him from his command, which he conferred on another: yet no long time had passed before Abdallah, remembering the prudence and value of Suleiman's counsels, desired greatly to speak with him, and said as much to his Viziers, but added that he did not well know how to tell him so.

One of the Viziers then present, called Muhamad Ben El Walid Ben Ganim, replied to the king, and said, that if he would give him leave to seek Suleiman Ben Venasos, he hoped to find and bring that Noble to his presence. Abdallah consented willingly, and Muhamad Ben Walid departed to the house of Venasos, announcing himself as a Vizier of the King.

Now it was the custom in Spain, under the Omeyan Princes, that a Vizier should not enter into the house of any but a Vizier of his own class,—and Suleiman permitted Muhamad to wait long for his reply, as one who but little prized the visit paid him. At length he gave directions for his admission, and the envoy was conducted to his apartment:

but Suleiman remained seated on his cushions without rising or offering his place to the approaching guest, as was befitting.

Ben Ganim then said, "How is this, Ben Venasos? dost thou not know that I am a Vizier of the king like thyself? or if so, how does it happen that thou dost not rise from thy seat and offer me the place due to me, with such honour as beseems the rank I hold?" To which Suleiman replied, "So it was in times past, when I was a poor foolish servant, a miserable slave like thee, but I am now a free man, as thou seest." Nor could Ben Ganim persuade Venasos to leave his retreat, and he was obliged to return to Abdallah with the history of his failure; whereupon the king did not hesitate to declare that he was much grieved to have lost that very honourable member of his Council, for the sake of a beard, however dignified and respectable.

At this time a Chief of those rebels who held the Sierras of Elvira, called Muḥamad Ben Adha El Hamdani, having fallen into discord with the other rebel leaders, and wandered about the Alpujarras for a certain period without any fixed abiding-place, took possession of Hisn Novales: the towns around that fortress having invited him to establish himself there, in the hope that he would defend them from the robbery and oppression to which they were subjected by the bandits infesting the country. This General, who was a man of much prudence, succeeded in attaching to his obedience more than one hundred villages, hamlets, and small towns, most of which were more or less strong by their position; having done which, he assembled the principal inhabitants of the most important communities, and having persuaded them to return to their allegiance, they sent him as their ambassador to beg the king's pardon, with security for the people thus prepared to resume their habits of loyalty and obedience. When Muhamad Ben Adha presented himself in Cordova, he was very well received by the king; but there were not wanting malicious persons who prevented him from obtaining the fulfilment of his desires so readily as he had hoped to do. Numerous incidents, which afterwards occurred, and the heavy calamities of the rebellion, produced results which compelled the king ultimately to

reduce by force of arms those very populations who were then ready to return of their own accord to his allegiance.*

Among other disorders of that period by which Abdallah was prevented from giving due attention to the matter proposed to his consideration by Adha El Hamdani, was a contest which took place between two of the Viziers of his Council, Muza Ben Hodeira and Isa Ben Ahmed Ben Abi Obda, each of whom pretended to assume a superiority in the Council over the other, and both maintaining that their seats in that assembly were of higher importance than those of their compeers. To this the king replied that all who sat in that Council were equals, that his own seat alone —as the president of all—was distinguished and superior; but he added, that in case of a dispute respecting precedency, his father, the Ameer Muhamad, had declared those of Syria to have the right of passing before the Veledine Arabs.

CHAP. LXVII.—OF THE EDUCATION OF PRINCE ABDERAHMAN, SON OF MOHAMAD, CALLED EL MACHLAD, AND THE DEATH OF HIS GRANDFATHER, KING ABDALLAH.

THOSE who had been entrusted with the charge of the young prince Abderahman had given the most zealous care to the rearing of the child, even from the moment when he was weaned, and that was at the time of the unhappy death of his father, the Prince Mohamad. The most renowned masters were selected for him, by order of his grandfather Abdallah, and these took care that his time should be employed to the best advantage even during his earliest childhood. They read the Koran to the youthful prince, and taught him to retain its doctrines in his memory, even before he had acquired the power of reading the holy passages for himself. When he had attained his eighth year they instructed him in the Sûna and knowledge of the Hadix or traditional history; then followed grammar, poetry, and the proverbial wisdom of Arabia, the biography of princes, the science of government, and other branches of human learning. He was also taught to ride well and to manage his

* The circumstances here alluded to are related at length in a future page.—TR.

horse with grace, to bend the bow, to use the lance, to wield the sword, and to handle other arms, as well as all the stratagems of war,—a class of exercises which he commenced in his eleventh year.

When Abderahman was playing with other children of his age, the king, his grandfather, would often keep his eyes fixed on him, in such an ecstasy of delight and admiration that he forgot everything but his grandchild. On one occasion, when, absorbed in that ecstatic contemplation, the twilight approached without Abdallah appearing to remark the lateness of the hour, his Vizier and the commander of his Guard, Abu Othman Obeidala Ben Gamri, took upon him to remind his master of that fact. The king then repeated the following verses celebrating his beloved grandson, and excusing his own absence of mind at the same time:—

"What is all other light and fire to the light of his eyes, my beauteous one, my treasure, the gem of my heart!

"How do all fair forms sink into nothing when compared with the beauty of thine, boy of my love!

"Are not his cheeks of the rose entwined with lilies? Is not his little sweet form the tender myrtle in its bending grace?

"While I look at the light of his eyes, I forget to recall whether daybreak or darkness be near!"

In the year 299 there was a great eclipse of the sun, and that body became totally dark: this event occurred on a Wednesday, the twenty-ninth of the moon Xawal, after the prayer of the Alazar;* and many, deceived by the gloom, made haste to reach the mosques, believing the time of the Almagreb, or Prayer of Sunset, to have come. The darkness finally became complete, and the stars were visible; but at the end of something less than an hour, the light began gradually to return, and it was not until after this that the sun did truly set, when the people assembled for the Prayer of that period.

During that same month of the eclipse, there died at Cordova the wise Gebir Ben Gaith of Libla; he had been preceptor to the sons of Haxem Ben Abdelaziz, and was renowned for his extraordinary erudition. In that same year

* The afternoon.

of 299 it was that the Sultana Athara, mother of King Abdallah, also departed this life; she died at the commencement of the moon Safar, and the king, who had loved, respected, and honoured her all his life, bewailed her loss with the bitterest tears. He commanded that a magnificent tomb should be prepared for her in the Alcazar of the Rusafa, and celebrated her funeral ceremonies with great pomp, feeling ever sad at the loss he had sustained: nay, from that time forward he thought no more of any thing but of his own death, and gave orders for the preparation of a second sepulchre near that of his mother, to the end that he might there be laid beside her.

It was at this period of profound melancholy that Abdallah composed those ascetic verses of his which are so full of the most vivid images, and the commencement of which is as follows:—

"Dost thou not hear the sound! the rush of wings,
As one who came in rapid flight were near?
'Tis Time that comes and brings the fated moment
When all thy hopes shall fade. Dost thou not see
How fares the world, with ever hastening march
To its dark doom? Dost thou not feel that nought
Hath permanence? Do not the moments pass,
Yet give no sign and raise no hand to warn thee
That they prepare thy fall? But know thou well
That to this end they move, and will not halt
Nor stay them on their path."—&c. &c.

The continued sadness and melancholy of the king caused him very soon to become grievously sick; he lost his sleep and appetite, and after a few days he perceived that his infirmity was unto death. Abdallah thereupon assembled his Viziers and Walies, declaring his grandson Abderahman, the son of his eldest son Muhamad, to be his successor in the kingdom, adding to this declaration an especial charge to his son Almudafar, whom he entreated to protect and guide the young Abderahman as he would a son of his own.

It was exactly one year and one month after the death of his mother that King Abdallah yielded to the fever with which he was afflicted, and in an access of which he died. This event took place in the commencement of the moon Rebie

Primera, and in the year of the Hegira 300; the king being then in the seventy-second year of his age and the twenty-fifth of his reign. Abdallah left eleven sons to mourn his loss; he had been a good king, ever cheerful and hopeful through all the tribulations and disorders by which the Spanish provinces were agitated during the whole period of his reign. An excellent leader of his troops in war, Abdallah was a careful observer of treaties when at peace; and even for this reason was censured by the fanatical Moslemah, who would have had him be ever at strife with the Christians, and urged him, although vainly, to perpetual war with the infidel Powers.

CHAP. LXVIII.—Of Abderahman Anasir Ledinallah.

The funeral ceremonies of King Abdallah being brought to a close, on that same day, which was the fifth of Rebie Primera in the year 300 of the Hegira,* Abderahman, called also Abulmotaraf, son of Prince Muhamad and grandson of the departed monarch, was proclaimed king with many evidences of the general satisfaction. The mother who bore him was of Christian parentage, and was named Maria.

At the death of his grandfather Abderahman was in the very bloom of his life, having scarcely completed his twenty-second year. He was of a most pleasing aspect, and possessed a gravity and dignified beauty highly becoming to a Prince; his complexion was of mingled red and white; his eyes were blue, and the expression of his features was most charming; but more than all to be commended in that young monarch were the virtues of his mind and the excellence of his heart. He was endowed with distinguished ability, and possessed considerable erudition, with a prudence beyond his years; he was besides most affable as well as graceful in conversation. These his admirable qualities were well known to all, and the content of his people in proclaiming and swearing allegiance to their young sovereign was thus universal and without a shade.

* A.D. 912.

The youthful king's uncle, Prince Abderahman Almudafar, loved him as his own son, and was the first to proffer the oath of obedience, which Abderahman received with demonstrations of love and respect so manifest and so becoming, that they touched the hearts of all present, and caused the eyes of many to be filled with tears.

On the very day of his accession, Abderahman restored the Cadi Muhamed Ben Said Ben Muza Ben Hodeira to the judicial office which he had filled with so much honour and integrity. In all the principal mosques the Chotba or public prayer was made for the new king, who called himself Abdallah as well as Abderahman, out of the love and respect which he bore to the memory of his grandfather; but his people subsequently gave him the various titles of Anasir Ledinallah, Defender of the Law of God, and Ameer Almumenin, or Prince of the Faithful, with others, which became current among them, as their desire to honour and exalt their sovereign increased.

The first attention of Abderahman Ledinallah was given to the reduction of the rebels and the subjugation of such among his subjects as had departed from their allegiance. By the affability of his manners he turned many ancient enmities to friendship, and appeased numerous discords of old standing: among certain of the most ancient families, for example, there had existed feuds and obligations to the avenging of blood, from time immemorial, but many of these the mildness and prudence of the king succeeded in appeasing and bringing to a close, while the friendliness of his nature gained the hearts of many who had long been offended and estranged from the princes of his house.

When, therefore, this monarch assembled his people for the subjugation of the rebels, there flocked to his service so innumerable a host of warriors, all eager to defend his cause, that it became needful to restrict the number of those who were permitted to follow each banner; since there was danger that the necessary labours of the field would be neglected by the husbandman, and that men might abandon the care of their families to follow their brethren to the war.

The royal forces entered the Comarcas of Toledo with one hundred and twenty-eight banners, under which there

served forty thousand men. This host quickly occupied the forts previously in the power of the rebels; and Caleb Aben Hafsun, fearing the encounter of so formidable an army, retired into the East of Spain, proposing there to strengthen his band, and having assembled a sufficient body of troops, to return and meet the levies of the new king. The rebel meanwhile remitted the defence of Toledo to his son Giafar, whom he left there with a garrison sufficiently powerful for the maintenance of the struggle which he anticipated, the city being well supplied moreover with provisions of all kinds no less than with all the munitions of war.

But now, through the whole province of Toledo, the towns sent forth their inhabitants in emulation of each other to claim the protection of their king, and to assure him of their ready obedience: the strong city of Toledo itself being the only one which refused to acknowledge his authority.

The leaders of the royal army not considering it advisable to take the time required for the siege of Toledo, directed their march towards the East of Spain, but had not proceeded far when they received notice that Calib Aben Hafsun was advancing to their encounter with a formidable array; a piece of intelligence which caused much gladness to all the noble generals and brave troops of Abderahman, as well as to the King himself. His uncle, Prince Almudafar, took the active arrangement of the field as being well experienced in military affairs; he fixed the order of battle, reserving the command of the advanced guard for himself, and giving Abderahman that of the centre and main body: the right wing was led by the Wali Abderahman Ben Bader, and the left by the Wali Gehwar Ben Abdallah El Hezami: the rear and reserve were given to the conduct of the honourable old man Obeidala Ben Gamri.

The force of Aben Hafsun Ben Arius was found to be superior in numbers to that of Abderahman, but inferior as to its appointments and the character of the cavalry; the generals of his army were, however, some of the bravest and most experienced warriors of Eastern Spain, including the Sierras of Tadmir and Elvira.

The contending forces met in a spacious plain, than

which no better scene for the horrors of a battle could be well imagined. The skirmishing parties of the two hosts essayed each other's quality in several encounters, and these having fallen back upon the main battle, the two armies then rushed as by one consent to the strife, with the fearful clash of trumpets, the clangour of a hundred other instruments, and the deafening cries of men eager for the conflict. The result of that combat was for a long time uncertain, but the strength of Abderahman's cavalry decided the fortune of the day: thrown into confusion by the irresistible charges of that arm, the troops of Caleb Aben Hafsun, despite their steadiness and bravery, were compelled to give way, and at the set of sun they abandoned the field to the conquerors, leaving the soil hidden by their dead and wounded. That night the relics of the defeated army fled before the victors, but they had first seen seven thousand of their number lying on the crimson field. The host of the king also counted heavy losses, for the rebels were brave and long practised in the use of their arms, and the numbers of the royal army were diminished by upwards of three thousand men. Hafsun Omar Aben Arius retired first to Huna Conca, and subsequently to such other fortresses as he still retained.

The field of battle had meanwhile filled the heart of the King Abderahman Ledinallah with grief and horror. Had, then, the children of the Faith no blood of other enemies to shed, that they must so cruelly spill that of their own Moslemah? Were there no foes of Islam to chastise? no lives of their brethren unavenged on the frontier, that his people must tear each other thus? The king could not console himself at sight of his subjects there slain, and commanded that the wounded of both sides should be cared for with equal attention.

After this victory, thus deeply lamented, Abderahman returned to Cordova, accompanied by the generals of Andalusia and the soldiers of his guard. His uncle Almudafar he left to continue the war against the rebel Hafsun Ben Arius; and that prince reduced the whole province of Toledo, from the declivities of Axarrat to the South and as far as the land of Tadmir; Calib Hafsun not daring to

appear beyond the most inaccessible of his rocky fastnesses, in the most remote of which he had taken refuge.

In the year 302 King Abderahman commanded that the Dies for the gold and silver coinage should be changed. His predecessors of the race of Omeya ruling in Spain had up to that time retained the form and impressions used by the Caliphs of Damascus; the only difference between the money of Spain and that of the East being in the name of the places where each was coined: this was the case for the dinars or gold, as well as the dirrhems or silver, and feluces or inferior copper coin. But Abderahman now ordered that his name and titles should be placed on one side, while the Confession of the Unity of God and of the Truth of the Prophetic Mission was stamped on the other. Around the edge was engraved the date when and place where each coin had been struck. Among his titles thus placed on the currency Abderahman assumed that of Imaum, or Prince of the Faith, as was done by the Caliphs of the East.

In the year 302 there died at Seville, which was his native place, the learned Ibrahim Ben Ahmed Ben Moad, a man greatly respected in that city. He was the nephew of the renowned Said Ben Moad, and the disciple of that sage in every species of erudition. In the same year there died at Saragossa Casim Ben Thabita Ben Hazami El Adfi, who had travelled in Africa, Egypt, and Syria, had studied in all the most renowned schools of those parts, and held intercourse with all the eminent Sages of the time. Returning to Saragossa he had more than once been offered the appointment of Cadi of the Aljama in that city, which was his native place; but these offers Casim Ben Thabita had constantly refused, and would accept nothing. His father, who was one of the principal men of the city, being much displeased at these refusals, so earnestly pressed him to accept the office proposed to him that the son at length requested three days to consider the matter, and try if he could prevail on himself to comply; but on the last of the three he departed from the life of this world, God not having destined him for the career on which his father would have had him enter. Casim Ben Thabita was born on the twentieth day

of the moon Dylhagia in the year 247. He was a man of great excellence as well as learning, and enjoyed the high esteem of all who held intercourse with him.

CHAP. LXIX.—OF THE EXPEDITION UNDERTAKEN BY THE KING ABDERAHMAN ANASIR LEDINALLAH TO THE SOUTH OF SPAIN.

WHILE the Prince Almudafar was occupied on the eastern frontier with the rebel Hafsun Aben Arius, King Abderahman left Cordova for the Comarcas of the south, whither he repaired in the hope of subjugating the Alarabes* of the Sierras of Elvira and of Somontan, who did not permit the towns of that district to enjoy an hour of repose. The king was accompanied by the troops of Cordova and by his guard, but his presence alone made more conquests than did the force of his arms. He brought a large number of towns to a willing obedience, and their inhabitants, at the same time that they voluntarily took the oath of allegiance, also desired to be furnished with arms, with which they promised to defend the district against the rebels and bandits, thus preserving the same in his obedience. Abderahman received all well, and many became so much devoted to his person that they attached themselves to the royal army, and were among the most forward in all the perils and labours of the war. The principal of Calib Aben Hafsun's followers in that region submitted themselves to King Abderahman, who accepted their proffered service with the goodness natural to his character, and employed them according to their position and abilities, consenting to forget their rebellion and the evils they had caused, in consideration of the hopes they gave for the future, and because he desired above all things to see peace reign among his people, certain that the calamities and devastations so long resulting from the discords of the Tribes, could be reduced by nothing short of her wholesome influence.

Among the most important of the disaffected who then came to recommend themselves to the mercy of the king,

* This name is usually given to certain tribes of Arabians established in Barbary, and though not nomade, yet living under tents as do the Arabs of the Desert.—TR.

was the Wali Ahmed Ben Muhamad Ben Adha El Hamdani, General of the rebel forces in the Sierra of Elvira. He was graciously received by Abderahman, who gave him the Alcaidia of Alhama, a very strong fortress in that district. A noble Xeque called Obeidala Ben Omeya also presented himself to offer allegiance to the king at that time. He also had followed the banners of Hafsun Ben Arius, had taken possession of Cazlona, and had commanded the troops of Huesca, all in the name of the rebel chief. Him Abderahman appointed to be Wali of Jaen, having consideration for the nobleness and valour of the man.

After having visited all the Comarcas of Elvira without meeting opposition or resistance in any part, having conciliated the most powerful leaders of the rebel party and received the oath of allegiance from more than two hundred strong towns, the king returned to Cordova, dismissing the Xeques and Alcaides who had accompanied him, all highly satisfied. The day of his entrance into the capital was held as a great festival, and one of general gladness and rejoicing.

In this year of 303 Ishac Ben Dhezame, Cadi of the Aljama of Toledo, died in that city: he was a man of much integrity and a most exemplary life; and in the same city there died shortly after the noble Xeque Ismail Ben Omeya, who was distinguished among all the inhabitants for his great liberality: he was followed to the grave by the whole city, and his loss was lamented by all.

It was in this year that El Mahedi,* who had raised himself to power in Africa, commenced the building of a city, which he called from his own name Almahedia: and the matter was on this wise. Passing along the coast of Africa, El Mahedi had remarked a piece of ground which formed a peninsula, being united to the main land of the continent by a very narrow isthmus, as the hand is united to the arm by the wrist. Here then he commanded that the foundations of his city should be laid, furnishing the same with forts and walls, having strong towers at regular intervals and very large gates of bronze, each weighing no less than one hundred quintals. El Mahedi subsequently established his court in this place: he commenced his work on a

* Or Mehedi, the Guide or Teacher.

Saturday, the twenty-first day of the moon Dylcada in the year 303, and when he saw the fortifications of his capital completed, El Mahedi* said, "Now can I dwell in Africa with security."

CHAP. LXX.—Of the dispositions made by king Abderahman for guarding the Spanish coast.

In the year 305 King Abderahman Anasir Ledinallah was occupied in the repair and embellishment of his palaces in Cordova, executing many works of great magnificence and making commodious additions to the same, when he received notice from his Walies on the coast of the Mediterranean to the effect that the Africans and even the Alarabes of Sanhaga and Masamuda had begun to infest the islands and coasts of Spain by their piratical incursions. They added that the princes then in insurrection in Barca and other parts of Africa had united their ships, and had not only landed in Sicily, but were even venturing to debark in Calabria, whence they were taking much spoil and many captives.

The king thereupon despatched the Wali Ocaili with a well-appointed fleet, commanding him to cruise along and defend the coasts of Spain. He also sent an experienced officer to Majorca, the Sevilian general, Giafar Ben Othman Mustafa Abulhasen Ben Casila namely, a man well acquainted with those seas. Abderahman furthermore gave orders for the construction in all the dockyards of the kingdom of large ships, strong, and well supplied with all that could enable them to oppose those of the Africans with success: these works he commanded his servants to see carried on diligently and without ceasing.

The general superintendence of his finances, and the office of receiver of his revenues arising from the Azaque, Abderahman confided to the Toledan Wahib Ben Muhamad who had the reputation of being profoundly skilled in the care and administration of public monies; as his

* Of this adventure the origin and history will be found in a future page.

assistants in that important charge, the king gave Muhamad the Alcatibes, or Secretaries, Muza Ben Chair and Aben Badr.

In this year of 305 there broke out a terrible and devouring conflagration in the public square of Cordova, and the fury of that fire consumed all the buildings of the market; but the lives of the inhabitants were fortunately not sacrificed, because the fire commenced very early in the night. It continued burning the whole of three days, and caused fearful havoc among the property of the people dwelling in that vicinity. The king immediately commanded that the whole should be rebuilt with increased solidity and beauty: for the expenses of the works he set apart the product of the taxes received from the whole province. In that same year the suburbs of Meckinesa, a city in the north of Spain, were likewise destroyed by a conflagration, and that year was called the year of fires, seeing that the market of Fez and that of Tahart, the capital of Zeneta, were also burnt within the twelve months of its course.

At this time one of the four Cadies forming the council of the Cadi Mayor of Cordova was the Andalusian Sohaib Ben Muza. He was a drinker of wine, as belonging to the sect of those of Irak, who permit that indulgence, and on his seal he had caused to be engraved the following words: "*Ye Alimê cul gaib, cun wufê bi Sohaib;*" which, being interpreted, may be read as follows: "O Thou who knowest all concealed things, be gracious to Sohaib." Now it chanced that Sohaib was one day drinking wine in the house of the Hagib Muza Ben Hodeira, when some of the company, taking his seal, so altered certain letters and points of the inscription, that the sense remained thus: "*Ye Alimè cul abib, cum wufe bi Sohaib*"—"O Thou who knowest all that are given to wine, be gracious to Sohaib." The Cadi, not remarking what had been done, continued to use his seal as before; and some of the writings which he had sealed with that inscription fell into the hands of the king, who, having read it, said to him, "How, Sohaib! thou drinkest wine! for thy very seal makes it manifest." Hearing this, the Cadi lost colour, and, astonished to find that his seal had made confession of his weakness, he said to the king, "I

cannot comprehend how this hath befallen; but I hope that God will pardon my fault, and that thou also wilt not refuse thy forgiveness." The king was much amused, and could not but admit that the jest was a very ingenious one.

While Abderahman was busied with his various affairs in Cordova, he received letters from his uncle Almudafar, communicating many advantages gained over the rebels, who, being driven from all parts, had been compelled to shut themselves up so closely amidst the wilds, that, not daring to appear in the peopled districts, the means of life had failed them, and it was a pity to see them thus perishing amidst the asperities of those deserts. The prince therefore judged it better to make an end of those evils by reducing the remnant still holding out at one blow, thus assuring to the towns that repose and security of which they stood so much in need. He was consequently preparing to assemble the whole force of the province of Tadmir, and pursue the rebels to their destruction without any considerations of indulgence or injudicious lamenting for the fate which they had themselves provoked.*

CHAP. LXXI.—Of the visits paid by king Abderahman to his cities of Murcia and Zaragoza (Saragossa).

The king was convinced that the reasonings advanced by his uncle were of force, and he wrote to his Alcaides in the Comarcas of Tadmir and Valencia to that effect, commanding them to hold their levies, both of cavalry and foot-soldiers, ready for the ensuing spring, when they were to pass through the entire province, subjecting every town still remaining attached to the party of the rebel Calib Hafsun Ben Arius. Abderahman himself also left Cordova, the time being come,

* The Arabian writers here allude to the humane precepts of Ali, the cousin of Mahomet, who forbade the Moslemah to continue their pursuit of each other beyond one Cora or Comarca when the war raged unhappily between themselves; he also prohibited the slaying of a fugitive who had got beyond the field of battle, and permitted no siege of a town to continue longer than a certain number of days. These regulations, so congenial to the mild nature of Abderahman, his uncle, the prince Almundafa now intimated his intention of setting aside.—*Condé.*

and repairing to the land of Tadmir, made his entry into the cities of Murcia, Auriola, Lorca, and Kenteda, in all of which he was received with acclamations by the people, while the principal inhabitants of each place came forth from their towns, requesting permission to join themselves to the forces already conducted by the king.

The cities of the coast—Elche, Denia, and Xativa—were also visited by Abderahman Ledinallah; and in Valencia he remained several days. He likewise passed through Murbiter, Nules and Tortosa, being received in each and all with manifestations of the utmost gladness. Pursuing his way along the shores of the Ebro as far as Alcanit, the sovereign then made halt for some time in that city for the purpose of receiving the submission and oath of obedience of many towns, the powerful men of which had assembled at Alcanit to tender their allegiance. From that place Abderahman departed with a powerful host, and took up a position before Saragossa, where there was a very large number of the partizans of Calib Hafsun Ben Arius; but the people, and a considerable number of the most important inhabitants, declared for the king with public demonstrations of loyalty. The youth of the city were more particularly forward on that occasion; they opened its gates, and sallied forth to offer themselves and the obedience of the city to their sovereign, who received them with much kindness. The principal Xeques and citizens then presented themselves at the gates, resigning the keys of their town with infinite submission into the hands of Abderahman Ledinallah. Greatly rejoiced by this peaceful termination of the difference existing between himself and his subjects, the king assured the partizans of Hafsun Ben Arius then in the city, of his pardon, and a total oblivion of all past offences, provided they would appear in his presence to claim this favour within a certain time. From this offer Abderahman excepted Calib Hafsun and his sons only; but from them he required an especial and unconditional surrender, reserving to himself the right of dealing with them as it might seem good to him.

On the day following his appearance before Saragossa the king made his public entry into that city with the flower of his cavalry, and the inhabitants made the day one of great

festivity and rejoicing. Abderahman took up his abode in the Alcazar, and remained several days at Saragossa, the cheerful situation and pleasing aspect of which pleased him greatly. While yet abiding there, Calib Hafsun despatched two Alcaides as his envoys to seek the presence of the king, with power to accept such conditions as might be granted, if in any way acceptable. Abderahman received these messengers, without pomp or parade of any kind, in a field on the shores of the Ebro, when the Alcaide of Medina Fraga, who was the elder of the two, proposed the conditions which his master desired to offer, with the most unceremonious freedom. He set forth that Aben Hafsun, regretting, as a good Mosleman, to see the blood of the faithful flowing in civil discords, desired to be at peace with the king Abderahman, to which intent he requested that all the East of Spain might be yielded up to him in quiet possession, to be held by himself and his successors for ever, adding, that on this condition he would take upon his hands the defence of the frontier, and would aid the king with his forces whenever he might have need of assistance. The cities of Toledo and Huesca he promised to surrender without delay, with all the fortresses of their Comarcas then occupied by his troops.

To this Abderahman replied that the Andalusians might attribute to an extraordinary exercise of patience on his part, and to no other cause, that he had thus appeared to suffer the proposal of conditions from a Rebel and leader of bandits to his lord and king, and had for a moment permitted him to give himself the aspect of one who had the right of proceeding in the manner of princes. He added that, being Envoys, he would not command that they should be impaled and lifted aloft on their stakes in the eyes of all the people, but that they were at once to return to their leader and bid him know the king's pleasure, which was that he should present himself within a month from that time to submit his fate to the will of his lord, but that, if he overpassed that period of delay, he need not then hope to receive mercy at any time or on any conditions. With this answer Abderahman dismissed the Alcaides.

Everything being set in order in Saragossa, the king left his uncle, the prince Almudafar, in that city, with directions

to continue the war on the frontiers, Abderahman himself repairing to Cordova, and visiting a large portion of the interior of Spain on his way.

On his part, Calib Hafsun Ben Arius, having received the reply of the king, would not yet give up his hope of maintaining a successful opposition to the power of that monarch; confiding in the fidelity of his followers and in the alliances he had formed with the Christians of Afranc and those of the mountains. He visited his cities, encouraged his sons, who feared that his fortune was forsaking him, and making the best dispositions for future warfare that were in his power, he sent a body of his most trusted and experienced troops to the territories of Toledo, for the purpose of supporting the constancy and confirming the hopes of his partizans in that city and its Comarcas.

CHAP. LXXII.—Of the expedition of Abderahman Ledinallah to the Sierras of Elvira.

When the king Abderahman Anasir arrived at Cordova, all the people of the city poured forth to receive him, and he entered amidst the festive acclamations of that immense multitude. A short time after his return there came advices from the Sierras of Elvira with accounts of what was then done by the armed bands in those mountains. More than one hundred towns there owned the power of Muhamad Ben Adha El Hamdani, and paid a willing obedience to his commands. This leader was the descendant of a brave and ancient race, and was known among his people by the name of Asomor. At the commencement of the rebellion among the Arabs and Maulidines of those hill districts, he had been distinguished above all the generals of those ferocious people for the prudence of his counsel and the humanity of his disposition, as well as for his invincible valour. Under his protection, therefore, the towns had sought and found a shelter from the violence and rapine of the wild mountain hordes.

He it was who, as before related, had repaired in person to Cordova during the latter days of King Abdallah, having

first persuaded the people of that region to return to their allegiance, and bearing their promises to that effect to the foot of the throne; they having the recent memory of all their past sufferings as an incitement, and consenting without reluctance to accept his good offices with the sovereign, whose presence he had sought as their accredited Envoy. But, for his misfortune, and to the misery of the country, King Abdallah was then absorbed by the pressing cares around him, and Muhamad Ben Adha could not obtain attention. He then returned to the Sierras, and maintaining such order in the towns as he was able, did, in fact, preserve a certain appearance of regular authority, and governed the district exceedingly well. Living thus in a species of independence, and accustomed to the mild rule of the Ameer Asomor, who required but little at their hands, and that little easy of accomplishment, the people of his district were satisfied with their condition, and did not seek the protection of the new king nor offer him their allegiance, although the Wali Asomor had given himself up personally to the mercy of the sovereign, who had received him well, and given him the Alcadia of Alhama.

But it now chanced that a Vizier, accompanied by a band of soldiers, was sent into the country by order of Wahib Ben Muhamad, Receiver of the Revenues arising from the Azaque; and this officer, commanded to collect the tithes of that province, being unacquainted with the character and disposition of the natives, conducted himself with much rigour towards them. He furthermore permitted his soldiers an amount of license not usual in those lands, where the inhabitants, unaccustomed to servitude, would not calmly behold their dwellings invaded by armed bands, and themselves treated as rebels and contumacious insurgents by those who were not authorised to do more than demand the amount of their contributions.

The end of this disorder was, that the people, forgetting the obedience they owed their sovereign, and listening only to their rage and desire of vengeance, fell furiously upon the soldiers thus offending them; and killed the greater part of those troops. That commencement once made, the whole district flew to arms; and hastening to their Wali, Ahmed Ben Muhamad El Hamdani, they forced him to become their

leader, in despite of his reluctance, declaring that they had no other defender but himself. Finding that better might not be, Muhamad then commanded that the cities of Baza, Bogiana, Albuchera, and Tagela, with other strong places, should be fortified and put into a state of defence; being not without hope that the nature of the country, and its remarkable asperity, would enable him to maintain these holds.

King Abderahman was much displeased by the disobedience of those towns, and still more by the failure in his fidelity of the Wali Asomor. He was therefore determined to inflict severe punishment; and set forward himself for that purpose, with the cavalry of Cordova, and the people belonging to Ecija, Bolcuna, and Algafdat.

Certain towns of the Comarca, which not having had the same cause of offence, had remained in their allegiance, were now complaining of being oppressed by those in rebellion, and in their haste to defend these, the generals of the king proceeded with so much diligence, that they gave the insurgents only so much time as enabled them to withdraw into the most remote and inaccessible of their mountain fastnesses. The more important of the forts, such as Baza and Bogiana, were quickly occupied by the royal troops, and those of the rebels not appearing on any point, Abderahman proceeded to Jaen, into which city he made his entrance on Thursday, the fourteenth of the Moon Xaban, in the year 306.

It was on this occasion that the renowned Poet Aglab Ben Xoaibi, who was a native of Jaen, was presented to the King Abderahman Anasir; when his genius and the elegance of his verses gave the monarch so much pleasure that he took him in his train to Cordova, admitting him to his service, nay, even to his intimacy, and giving him the title of his poet.

Becoming weary of chasing the fugitive rebels through their mountains, and considering that a war with those insurgents was but little worthy of the sovereign, Abderahman subsequently committed the reduction of the province to the Wali of Jaen, Labi Ben Obeidala; and after he had remained to repose himself some few days in Jaen, he returned to Cordova.

The king had scarcely arrived at his Alcazar from that visit

to the Alpujarras, when he received advices from his uncle Almudafar, wherein that prince, informing the king respecting the progress of the war against the rebels on the frontier, gave him also intelligence of the death of their general, Calib Hafsun, who had departed from life at Huesca; but had left two sons, Suleiman and Giafar, the heirs of his valour no less than of his rebellious obstinacy of spirit. The death of this Calib took place in the year 306; and Abderahman gave thanks to God for that the number of those who disturbed the peace that should exist among the Moslemah was diminished thereby.

Numerous mosques were now constructed, by order of the king; some at Cordova, and others in other towns of the empire. In those built at Cordova and Seville, Abderahman caused fountains to be erected, with beautiful basins or vases of marble. The king likewise gave orders for repairing the great Bridge of the Guadalquiver; and the superintendence of these works, with all that was required for the royal palaces, he confided to his Vizier, Nasir Abu Othman, whom Abderahman Ledinallah greatly esteemed, distinguishing him for his noble character and learning among all the Xeques of his council.

In the year 307, there was a great pestilence in Spain; and the mortality was so terrible in that country, and throughout the west, that men became weary of burying their dead. In Africa, as well as Spain, public prayers and acts of penitence were daily performed, in the hope of averting the anger of Allah; and the inhabitants of the towns never left the mosques, being perpetually occupied in imploring the Divine mercy. There was a great hurricane also in Almagreb and a part of Andalusia,—many large trees being torn up by the roots, and numerous houses cast down by the same.

In that same year, there died at Cordova the Prefect of Prayer of the Aljama, Ismail Ben Boxair. He was accompanied to his grave by a large concourse of people; and was laid to rest in the Macbora, or cemetery, of the Arrayanes, which is situate in the suburbs. It was about the same time that Abderahman made Chalaf Ben Hamid El Caneni, or of Canena, Cadi of Sidonia,—the worthy appointment of a man esteemed by all for his excellence and great learning.

Meanwhile, the rebels of the Sierras of Elvira, led by

their Ameer, Asomor, had no sooner become aware of the king's departure than they ventured to come down from their hill-forts, and descended into the plains. The Wali of Jaen went forth against them; and in a sharp skirmish that ensued, he obtained the advantage; but the rebels, feigning to fly with more terror than they felt, attracted their pursuers through a Rambla* into a very narrow defile, thickly wooded and surrounded by rocks. Here they turned on the troops of the Wali, and, others of their number pouring out from the gorges, the royal force was attacked on all sides. Perceiving their error, the more cautious and less advanced began to retreat; but they were now in their turn pursued; and although they drew close together, and united their bands to the utmost of their power, they were yet totally defeated, with a cruel slaughter; very few of the number succeeding in cutting a way with their swords through the ferocious hordes now surrounding them, and emulously bringing them down. But this misfortune, and others of a similar character, suffered by the people of Jaen, were concealed by the Wali in command, Obeidala, whose reports to King Abderahman went to show that he was continuing the war with varying fortunes, while the rebels were, in fact, daily increasing their strength, and fortifying their towns; their successes rendering them ever bolder and more obstinately bent on resistance.

On the Eastern frontier, the Prince Almudafar had meanwhile obtained possession of several towns and fortified places; but in a skirmish fought on the lands of Lerida, in the year 308, Abdelruf Ben Omar El Casati died fighting in the front of his men. He was one of the chief men of Merida; and his death was deeply regretted by Almudafar, not only for his personal worth and bravery, but also because he had possessed very great influence on that frontier. The battle wherein Abdelruf lost his life resulted in the taking, by Almudafar, of Medina Fraga, and Mequineza, which had long been held by the rebels. The prince likewise entered Montixon, a place which had been maintained in its obedience by the Wali Ishac Ben Ibrahim El Ocaili.

In the Sierras of Elvira, the rebels continued to retain the advantage; and Labi Aben Obeidala, the Wali of Jaen,

* Water-course, or dry bed of a torrent.

was at length compelled to request aid from the Alcaides of Bulcona and Algafdat, as well as from Ishac Ben Ibrahim Ben Sacr El Ocaili, who repaired to the scene of strife in the year 309. They fought against Asomor for some time with various fortunes; but he subsequently defeated them in a battle of some importance; and availing himself of his victory, he took the city of Jaen by surprise, occupying numerous fortresses in the Comarca some short time afterwards.

This unpleasant intelligence was brought to Cordova by the Wali Ishac Ben Ibrahim, who was received with much honour by the king, to whom he related all the circumstances of his defeat, describing the state of the disturbed province with infinite exactitude, while Abderahman Ledinallah listened with as much respect as he could have done if that respectable chief had come to communicate a victory, or had brought him news of subjugation and conquest. Deciding that the old general should remain at Cordova to take the repose which his advanced age required, Abderahman determined to repair himself to the mountains; and wrote to his Alcaldes of the district of Tadmir, commanding them to assemble their banners for proceeding to the war.

In this year, the Hagib of the king, who was called Ismael Ben Badre, departed from life. It was he who wrote the "Eulogies of Illustrious Men." Then the king gave the charge of Hagib to the Cadi Muhamad Ben Said Ben Muza, a man of great learning and integrity, and one much beloved by the people. This Hagib gained the confidence of Abderahman to a degree which, as hath been remarked by his Vizier Abdelmelic Ben Gehwar, was scarcely to be believed,—Muhamad Aben Said being a man so reserved and severe that none could have expected him to win the heart of his lord. There were beside, two other cavaliers, both learned and accomplished, who stood also high in the favour of the king at this time; these were Hassan Ben El Hassan Abu Aly, called El Sonat, a man of high culture and elegant acquirements, and Saadon Ben Omar of Raya, both of whom occasionally eulogized the King Abderahman Ledinallah in admirable verses.

The troops of Cordova, and those of the land of Tadmir, having assembled, the king departed for Jaen; to which

city he laid siege without delay; nor was it long before the place was abandoned by the rebels, who retired secretly, and by night, towards their mountains. Abderahman then sent his infantry in pursuit, by several routes,—some of the insurgents having taken refuge in caves of the hills, and amidst precipitous rocks, where the cavalry could not follow them, while others had sought refuge in the stronghold of Alhama, which had been well fortified, and was amply provisioned, by the General Asomor.

The strength and position of this place, with the bravery and steadiness of its defenders, caused the siege of Alhama to be a long and arduous one; but the king declared that his camp should not be removed until he had the head of the perfidious Asomor at his disposal. Fierce and obstinate combats were then daily fought beneath the walls; but the besieged defended them with desperate courage; and it was not until a portion thereof had been undermined, and brought down by means of fire, that the royal troops found means to enter. They then succeeded in forcing their way, and made a frightful carnage; suffering a severe loss themselves, but victory finally declaring on their side. Those who were found alive in the fortress were put to the edge of the sword; but these were, however, few,—almost all having died fighting before the victory had been decided. Among the dead and dying was found Asomor, covered with wounds; and, on the point of yielding up his last breath, he was taken into the presence of the king, who commanded that his head should be taken off; and this being done, he sent it to Cordova, with intelligence of his success. That siege and destruction of Alhama took place in the commencement of the year 311, or, as some authorities have it, at the end of the preceding year.

King Abderahman Ledinallah now paid a visit to Granada, in which city he remained some time, that abode being more than commonly agreeable to him. On this occasion, the king appointed Abulhasan Aly Ben Omar, of Hamdan, Cadi of the Aljama of Granada. This Abulhasan was of the Syrian race of the Algaribe Meruans.

At the end of the year 310, there died at Cordova the accomplished critic Othman Ben Rebia, a writer of distinguished learning, who was a native of that city. He had

made a collection of the best poems composed by the most renowned authors of Spain.

After the death of their leader Asomor, the towns of Sierra Elvira surrendered; most of them being reduced by force of arms, but some few of their own proper movement, and with conditions proposed and agreed to by either party. Thus having put an end to that long and sanguinary contest, the king returned to Cordova, where he was received with numerous demonstrations of loyalty and gladness by his people.

CHAP. LXXIII.—Of the surrender of Toledo.

When the king's guards had reposed for a certain time, after the labours of the war in the district of Elvira, Abderahman Ledinallah gave orders to his generals in the Comarcas of Toledo, to the effect that they should take such steps as should secure the reduction of that city. To the Wali Abdallah Ben Jali, who commanded the fortresses on the Tagus, the king gave an especial commission; and that general accordingly proceeded to the Comarcas of Toledo with the people of Medina Zorita and the district within its jurisdiction. They entered by way of Talavera and Calatrana, making incursions over the whole Comarca, and destroying the harvests, with all the fruits of the fields, of whatever kind, that they could bring within their reach; for such was the command of the king, who determined to deprive the Toledans of their means of life. This, then, was effected by Abdallah accordingly, who cut up the tilled fields, and did not permit the cultivators to gather produce of any kind for the space of two years.

At the end of the year 313, there died at Cordova the brave and renowned General, Ishac Ben Ibrahim Ben Sacr El Ocaili, who had distinguished himself in the service of King Muhamad Ben Abderahman, and of his sons, the Kings Almondhir and Abdallah. He it was who had maintained the fortress of Montixon, on the Eastern frontier, against the rebel Hafsun Ben Arius; but having finally been defeated by that general, he had retired to Cordova, where he died. His bier was accompanied to the tomb by all the nobles of the capital.

Then the General Giafar Ben Hafsun, who was at that time in Toledo, perceived that if the king laid siege to the city, as it was manifest that he proposed to do, it would not be possible for him to hold out, with the scarcity of provisions resulting from the destruction made by Abdallah Ben Jali; Giafar was nevertheless resolved to make no surrender. But as all that the Wali Abdallah had not been able to carry off from the towns and Comarcas, which might have given aid to Giafar Ben Hafsun, he had destroyed, there was no hope of aid from without; and the general, amassing what treasures he possessed, or could obtain from his partizans, put forth the pretext of a sally for the defence of the place; and taking the boldest and most trustworthy of his followers, he departed from Toledo, having first committed the charge of the city to a very brave general, and to certain of the principal inhabitants; who, not suspecting his purpose, would fain have accompanied him in his pretended sally, to take part in the honour of the hoped-for victory.

In the third year of the successful incursions which Abdallah Ben Jali, notwithstanding the brave resistance made by Giafar Ben Hafsun, had made on the lands of Toledo, the king summoned his Walies of Merida and Valencia to repair with their forces to the siege of Toledo. The Alcaides of Talavera, of Uclis, and of Calatrava, were the first who sat down before the city; and they pitched their camp on the northern side, where the place is not watered by the river Tagus, for on the sides where that stream girdles Toledo the mountains were too lofty to permit approach; nay, the city is altogether inaccessible on that side. In the first days of the siege, the rebel troops made numerous sallies, wherein they were much favoured by certain ancient edifices, situate between the walls and the camp of the besiegers; but this appearance of success was not of long continuance. When the king was informed that his troops from Valencia and Merida had sat down before Toledo, he departed himself from Cordova, and repaired thither in person, with all speed, desiring to abridge the operations as much as possible. And in effect his presence caused the labours of the siege to proceed with much increased spirit; Abderahman commanding, among other things, that those old buildings mentioned as rising between the camp and the city should be levelled

with the ground. It is true that the place still retained the natural strength of its position, and the advantage of its singularly strong walls, but the sallies of the defenders were impeded by the removal of those edifices, and became thenceforward less frequent.

At length, the General left by Giaffar Ben Hafsun, seeing that the king was determined on the reduction of the city, and knowing that the citizens could not hold out much longer for want of provisions, while the small number of soldiers remaining to him were not sufficient to guard all the gates, and man the whole circuit of the walls, proposed to the principal inhabitants that they should join with him in requiring from Abderahman the security of their lives, on which condition he advised them to offer the surrender of the place. Many among them declared that they would hear nothing of surrender, but would bury themselves beneath the ruins; there were, nevertheless, others who agreed with the general, and advocated the more prudent determination of entreating the clemency of the king.

But the better to excuse their long and obstinate resistance, the citizens proposed that the greater part of the defenders should march out of the city some morning before daybreak, and making their way through the camp of the besiegers, by favour of the confusion occasioned by the surprise of the latter, should thus escape with their lives. when they, the inhabitants, instantly opening the gates to their king, should implore his forgiveness. The general of Giaffar himself approved and adopted this plan, which he determined to put into execution at dawn of day on the following morning, lest some notice thereof should reach the ears of the besiegers. Communicating this design to his companions in arms, the general then encouraged and animated them to the attempt,—making all ready that night; and immediately before daybreak, a body of two thousand cavalry burst impetuously forth on the part of the camp where were the tents of the people of Talavera. Every cavalier had a foot-soldier holding fast to his saddle-girth; and thus dashing forward, nearly four thousand men, favoured by the darkness and confusion, succeeded in forcing their way through the camp, very few of them falling into the hands of the royal troops.

All the camp was soon in arms; and when the king was

nformed that the soldiers of Giaffar Ben Hafsun had fled the city, he could not but anticipate the speedy surrender of the place.

Accordingly, that same day there came forth envoys from the Toledan people, imploring the sovereign to receive the inhabitants to his shelter and protection, not permitting that the peaceful, innocent, and unhappy dwellers in that city should be treated as rebels, because they had been compelled in their own despite to endure the soldiers of the rebel Giaffar Ben Hafsun within their walls, and seeing that the moment they had found themselves free from their oppressors, they had come forth to offer their allegiance to their king.

Abderahman Ledinallah thereupon assured them that their lives should be spared, and granted them also the security of their goods, commanding the citizens to open their gates with the confidence due to his word.

The envoys then returned to the city, and had hardly done so before all the gates were thrown open at one and the same time. The principal inhabitants came forth to offer themselves to the clemency of the king, who received them with much kindness. They were followed by a large concourse of people; and Abderahman then making his entrance by the Bab Sacra, with his principal generals and the cavalry of his guard, was received with acclamations and other evidences of universal gladness.

A general pardon to the inhabitants was then proclaimed; and the king dismissed the troops of Merida and Valencia to their respective provinces, despatching the general, Abdallah Ben Jali, in pursuit of the soldiers of Giaffar Ben Hafsun. The entrance of Abderahman Anasir Ledinallah into the city of Toledo took place towards the close of the year 315, and he remained there until the commencement of the following year.* Abderahman then gave the government of the place to Abdallah Ben Jali; and having set all things in order, the king returned to Cordova, where he was received with many rejoicings.

* Abulfeda declares that Abderahman entered Toledo by force, after having destroyed the walls, but this is not correct; he destroyed nothing more than the buildings mentioned in the text.—*Condé.*

The rebel Giaffar now solicited the aid of the Christians, offering himself as a tributary and ally to the King of Gallicia. The Christians thereupon descended upon the Douro with a large and well-appointed host. They crossed that river, and proceeding first to Zamora and Salamanca, they fixed their camp before Talavera, where they commenced the siege of the place by destroying some of its most ancient edifices. The troops of the Wali of Toledo set forth without delay to make head against that powerful army, and combated the same with varying fortunes; but he did not succeed in compelling them to raise the siege; nay, the Infidel forced an entrance into the town, whence his bands carried off a vast amount of riches, having first slaughtered men, women, and children, with barbarous cruelty.

Assembling the whole force he could muster, the Wali of Toledo again attacked the Christians, who then fled to their own land, bearing with them immense spoils. Abdallah Ben Jali pursued them to the Douro, and then paused to maintain that frontier; whence he wrote to the king, advising him of the grievous ravages committed in that irruption by the Christians, and relating how they had destroyed the city of Talavera, with many other towns of the Comarca, while the Moslemah troops could do but little to impede them in their retreat, since they had withdrawn by the mountains amidst rocks and wilds where the cavalry were unable to follow them.

In the year 317 there died at Cordova the Alfaqui Fadlo Ben Salema Ben Genair El Gohni El Baheni, a man of wonderful erudition, and celebrated for his acquirements through all the Aljamas of the East and West. There also died in the same year the wise Alfaqui Amram Ben Othman Ben Jonas, of Cordova.

About this time the uncle of the king, Prince Abderahman Almudafar, arrived in Cordova from the Eastern frontier, leaving the affairs of that district in a very satisfactory state, since the enemy did not dare to descend from his mountains, nor venture to show himself beyond the most retired of his strongholds. The attack made by the Christians on Talavera was the cause of the Prince's visit to the capital, and he had no sooner assembled the banners of Merida and Cordova than he departed to exact a heavy payment for the wrongs committed. The host of Almudafar then passed the Douro,

and entering Gallicia, his troops ravaged that country with fire and sword. They cut up the crops on all cultivated lands, burnt the towns, and spared the life of no man bearing arms. The people fled before them, and the villages remained depopulated, all their inhabitants hurrying to the shelter of the rocks, and concealing themselves in the clefts of the same, as the only means of saving their lives.

The spoil made and the number of captives taken, at length became so great, that Almudafar, not wishing to embarrass his troops with the charge of more, commanded them to prepare for their return. Arrived at the passage of the Douro, the Christians made their appearance in force; and the Moslemah, the better to prepare themselves for the coming fight, put all their captives to death, fearing that they should otherwise be embarrassed by them in the combat about to take place.

The battle that ensued was an obstinate and sanguinary one, but the Moslemah were ultimately conquerors; and the Christians turned their backs, leaving the greater part of their brethren on the field as an agreeable feast for the wild beasts and birds of prey.

Returning from this expedition, Almudafar commanded that the walls of Talavera should be repaired; and the works were completed in the year 319. In the year preceding, the prince had made his entrance into Cordova, where he was received with acclamations of triumph. In the same year of 318 there died in Cordova the Cadi Sohaib, a man much esteemed by King Abderahman for his integrity and love of justice, although more than suspected of being a drinker of wine, according to the custom of those who belong to the sect of Irak.

CHAP. LXXIV.—Of the affairs of Magreb, and the condition of the Beni Edris* in Fez.

At this time there was much civil discord in Almagreb,† and the land was in a flame with the numerous insurrections by which its repose was destroyed: but, for the better comprehension of many important events to be now related, it

* Beni Edis, Sons of Edris.—Tr.

† Almagreb, the West. Here the West of Africa is to be understood.—*Ibid.*

will be desirable that we should take a compendious view of the condition of Fez, when the cause and commencement of the power subsequently exercised in that kingdom by the sovereigns of Spain will become more clearly apparent than they could otherwise be made.

The Imaum Muhamad, brother of Abdallah, of the posterity of Aly—the cousin of the Prophet—had taken arms in Arabia against the Caliph Abu Giaffar Almanzor. This Imaum was the great-grandson of Husein, son of the Caliph Aly. But in the year of the Hegira 145, Muhamad was defeated near Medina by the troops of Almanzor, and he then took refuge in Nubia.

After the death of Almanzor, who was succeeded by his son Almahedi, the Imaum Muhamad returned to Mecca: this he did at the time when the pilgrims were assembled in that Holy House, when the people of Mecca and Medina, with the dwellers in all the towns of the Hegiaz, acknowledged and proclaimed him as their legitimate sovereign. His virtues and exemplary life afterwards obtained for him the appellation of Elnasf-Azequiyat, or the just and compassionate.

Now Muhamad had six brothers, Yahye, Suleiman, Ibrahim, Muza, Isa, and Edris. Four of these the Imaum sent into different countries to propagate Islam. Suleiman, one of those thus commissioned, was sent into Egypt, whence he subsequently passed into Nubia; but after the death of Muhamad he repaired to the Land of the Negroes, proceeding thence into the territory of Zâb in Africa, and finally journeying to Medina Telencen, in the territory of Magreb, where he established himself. Suleiman had many sons, who ultimately dispersed themselves through the provinces of Duncala and Sus Alaksa.

A formidable host had been assembled by the Imaum Muhamad, and with this force he proceeded in the year 169 to attack the army of the Caliph Almahedi, to whom he gave battle on a spot distant six miles from Mecca. The struggle was an obstinate one, and the loss great on both sides, but Muhamad was eventually defeated, and died fighting in the

* Here, as the reader will remark, our author takes one of those retrospective glances which are not unusual with him, as will frequently be made manifest hereafter.—Tr.

manner of a brave warrior and good Mosleman. A short time after that event, his brother Ibrahim, who was then at Basra, met a similar fate. Then Edris, made acquainted with the death of his two brothers, Muhamad and Ibrahim, took flight with his freedman and trusted servant Raxid, seeking refuge in the land of Egypt, where he was received into the house of a loyal partizan and follower of the descendants of Aly.

Now Egypt was at that time in the hands of the Alabas: but the Wali of the Province, although made aware of the arrival of Edris, did not wish to stain his hands with the blood of one belonging to the family of the Prophet; yet neither was he prepared to incur the displeasure of his sovereign by granting an asylum to the enemy of that monarch. He therefore sent a messenger to Edris, informing him that he was acquainted with the place of his retreat, recommending him to depart without delay, and expressing a desire that he should have left the land of Egypt within three days.

The man who had given him a shelter, then serving the hapless Edris as a guide, conducted the hunted fugitive by secret paths and unfrequented ways to the district of Barca, taking all precautions to prevent his falling into the hands of those who were then seeking him by the orders of the Caliph. Arrived in Barca, the guide there left him to the care of his freedman Raxid, after having provided him with all that was needful for the continuance of his journey.

From Barca Edris proceeded without delay towards Almagreb Alaksa, and after having remained some time at Cairvan, he arrived in the district above named without further molestation. But for his greater security the freedman Raxid then disguised his lord in the dress of a slave; and taking him to Medina Telencen, they made a further halt of some days. From that place they proceeded to Tanjiers, and reached the river Mulaya; this they crossed, and continued their flight through the province of Sus Aladna, which extends from the river Mulaya to the river Om-Arrebia, and is the most fruitful province of the West. The upper province, or Sus Alaksa, extends beyond the Gebal Alderen or mountain of Atlas, nay, even to Belad Nun. Tanjiers was at that time the principal place of all El Magreb.

Here Edris did not find means to accomplish the object

of his arrival, and, after remaining a few days only, he passed on, still accompanied by his faithful Raxid, to Velila, a city containing but few inhabitants, and situate in a very wild district. The governor of that place, Abdelmegid Eleurobi, was of the sect of the Motazelies: he received the traveller very favourably, and Edris, encouraged by his cordiality, made known his rank to that Wali. In Velila the fugitive then remained six months, at the end of which time Abdelmegid, having assembled his family, kinsmen, and the Aruba cavaliers, presented Edris to their acceptance as the legitimate sovereign of the kingdom; and with one accord they proclaimed him king. This happened in the moon of Ramazan, in the year 172.

The Zenetes, and other cavaliers of Barbary in Almagreb, having followed the example set them by Velila, Edris began to feel his power, and undertook various enterprises, which were crowned with success. He subjugated the whole province of Temezena, and immediately afterwards that of Tudela, whose inhabitants were for the most part Christians and Jews, all of whom he compelled to adopt Islam.

These successes continuing, Edris eventually subdued all El Magreb, subjecting the Christians and Jews to his obedience, and forcing all those infidels to profess the Faith, having taken possession of every city and fortress in which they had sought refuge, and granting them the safety of their lives only on condition of their acknowledging the Prophet and embracing the Law.

Emboldened by these fortunate expeditions, Edris then advanced against Telencen, proposing to subjugate the Cabilas of Magaraba and Beni Yefrun; but the governor accepted his supremacy without opposition, and the city being surrendered to him, Edris instantly commanded that a Mosque should be constructed therein.

The fame of the conquests made by Edris having reached the ears of the Caliph Harun Raxid, caused him much disquietude. Becoming more and more alarmed as the prosperity of Edris increased, Harun Raxid called his Vizier Yahye Ben Chalid El Barmeki to counsel, and by his advice despatched a very crafty messenger to El Magreb, command-

ing him to take his opportunity carefully, and assassinate the dreaded Edris. The envoy chosen for this evil office by the Caliph Harun and his Vizier, was Suleiman Ben Jorais, a learned and eloquent man, who soon found means to obtain the confidence of his fated victim; Edris being at that moment surrounded by rude unlettered persons only, and having no other companion with whom he could hold pleasant converse. The cares and solicitude of the faithful Raxid were for some time an impediment to the designs of the murderer, and he could find no opportunity for completing his infamous purpose: but having one day been left alone with Edris, he presented him with a pomander box of a very pleasing scent, saying that he had brought it from Asia, and begging that Edris would deign to accept it, urging that there were no aromatic confections in Almagreb.

Having prevailed on his victim to accept the gift, Suleiman then sought a pretext for departing, and going hastily to his house, he mounted a swift horse and fled with all speed; for the pomander-box was poisoned. Scarcely had the unfortunate Edris inhaled its perfume, when he fell fainting to the ground, and died before the close of the day, never again having found power to utter a word. The absence of Suleiman was remarked soon after the death of Edris, and as one by whom he had been met leaving the city described the haste with which he had departed, the faithful Raxid conceived suspicions of the truth, and set off in pursuit of the murderer. At the passage of the river Mulaya the true servant of his master overtook the assassin, and attacking him with fury, he wounded that wretched poisoner severely, having cut off his right hand; but the latter succeeded, nevertheless, in escaping with his life.

Edris did not leave any living child, but one of his slaves was within two months of her delivery, and Raxid having assembled the Barbary Cabilas, proposed that they should wait to see whether she would bring forth a son; in which case, he desired that they would acknowledge the infant so born as their lord; but if, on the contrary, the child of the murdered Edris should prove to be a daughter, then the Xeques should be at liberty to dispose of the throne at their pleasure. All agreed to this proposal, and among them-

selves they were even determined to select Raxid himself for their sovereign, in the event of the beautiful Kinza* bearing a daughter. But at the end of the two months the slave gave birth to a fine boy, who was called Edris, and was instantly acknowledged heir to the throne, the faithful Raxid being charged with the regency, as well as with the care and education of the prince, during his minority.

At the age of eleven years and some months, the young Edris was proclaimed king, and received the oath of allegiance from all the Cabilas. When he began to govern his kingdom by himself, the fame of his excellent qualities attracted many towns to his rule, and much increased the strength of his armies. He showed great favour to the Xeques of the Arabs, and many who were then making their abode in Spain, left that country to settle themselves in his States. Among others, the young monarch greatly distinguished Omair Ben Masab Alezdi, whom he took for his Vizier, with Amer Ben Muhamad Ben Said El Caisi, of the family of Cais Gailan, whom he made Cadi: a man of a most compassionate heart, and very learned in the Traditions, was Amer Ben Muhamad: he was a disciple of Malic and of Sofian, and having passed into Spain, he there joined in the war made against the unbelievers. Amer subsequently returned to Africa, fixing himself in the province of Adwa, where he found many Arabs ready to follow his counsels, all of whom he prevailed on to join the party of Edris.

The number of the Barbary tribes that finally resorted to the protection of the King Edris Ben Edris at length became so great that the city of Velila could no longer contain them, and the young sovereign was determined by that concourse of people to found a new capital, first choosing for the purpose a site near the river Zebu; but subsequently remarking that the place was likely to be exposed to inundations in the season of rains, he changed its position, and commenced the city in another part of the district, having purchased ground for the site from a Barbary tribe, to whom it belonged. The

* In my Arabian MS. of the History of Fez this slave is called Kethira; but in other good copies of the same work a change in the points brings the names to Kinza, which is one frequently given to women. —*Condé.*

commencement of that Capital was made in the year of the Hegira 192.

The city thus begun was laid out in two great portions or quarters, each divided from the other by walls; one of these the king called Alcarvin, the other Andalusia. In the first there was a great Aljama constructed, the money for its erection being supplied by an illustrious woman called Fatima; the Aljama of the quarter Andalusia being equally built with the funds of another noble woman named Mariana, both of whom had rightfully inherited the wealth of which they thus freely disposed from their parents and brothers. In later times these Aljamas were enlarged, at immense cost, and adorned with great pomp and magnificence.

Authors relate that a Jew was at this time digging the foundations of a house, when he found the figure of a female carved in stone, and on her breast an inscription in the following words:—"In this place there stood baths which endured for one thousand years, when they were destroyed for the purpose of building a Temple for the service of God on their site."

Respecting the fruitfulness of Fez in its various Comarcas, Abdelhalim tells us that "The gardens without the gate of Beni Mosafir, and the meadows of Mergacarca, yield fruit twice in the year, in such sort that the dwellers therein eat newly-plucked apples and fresh pears in winter as well as summer. In the district called Hafs Almasara, which is outside the gate named Bab Asheria, one of those in the quarter of Alcarvin, they reap the harvests forty days after having sown the seed, and I have with mine own eyes beheld land sown on the 15th of April, of which the produce was reaped in the end of May; so that in forty-five days it yielded a good harvest. Yet this was in the year 690, which was called the year of aridity, since no rain fell for the space of four months, and up to the 12th of April there had not descended one drop. The husbandmen tilled the field notwithstanding, and it pleased God that in so short a space of time the increase was as I have said."

After the completion of his city of Fez, Edris extended the limits of his kingdom by numerous conquests. He died

at the age of thirty-three, leaving twelve sons, the eldest of whom, called Muhamad, succeeded him on the throne.

During the reign of this monarch there were discords and domestic wars, by which the strength of the kingdom was much impaired; yet the sons of Edris continued to occupy the throne until the year 357, as we shall see. In the reign of Yahye, son of Muhamad fifth king of the line of Edris, the Aljama was enlarged, as it was in later times by other Princes, by several of whom it was successively increased and embellished. Yahye Ben Edris, the eighth sovereign of that dynasty, saw himself besieged in his capital by the troops of Obeidala, first Caliph of the Fatimites: it is true that he succeeded in obtaining the raising of that siege, but it was only by paying a vast amount of money and engaging to obey the Caliph Obeidala as his lord.

CHAP. LXXV.—Of the state of the Beni Aglab in Africa.

And now, for the better understanding of the causes which led to those wars that King Abderahman Anasir was compelled to wage in Africa, and more particularly in the land of Almagreb, it will be desirable to make a brief compendium of the most important events that befel the Beni Aglab, Lords of Africa.

In the year of the Hegira 144, the Caliph Abu Giaffar Almanzor named Muhamad Ben Alaxath El Gazei, Ameer of Africa, and among the troops by whom that Ameer was accompanied went Ahmed Ben Abi El Aglab, also called Ibrahim Ben Abdallah Ben Ibrahim Ben Aglab Abulabas, a man profoundly learned in languages, in astrology, and in other sciences, but exceedingly vain and very proud of the nobility of his birth. He was a kinsman of Ased Ben El Forat Ben Senan, a freedman of the Beni Solmi of Nisabur; this Ased, who was born at Harran, and was also called Abu Abdallah, was accustomed to say of himself—"I am Ased, and the lion is the worst of wild beasts; my father is Forat, and Forat is the worst of all waters; my grandfather was Senen, and the saw is the worst of all weapons." Abi Aglab relates of himself that in the year 144, he being then

* The reader will here remark another retrogression.

but two years old, his father took him to Cairvan, when he went thither with Muhamad Ben Alaxath El Gazei and the host; that he remained there five years, when he accompanied his father to Tunis, where he abode nine years; and he adds that when he had completed his eighteenth year, he knew the whole Koran by heart, having committed to memory each word of its contents. He then departed to the East, studied the sciences in Medina, and passed thence into Irak, returning to Cairvan in the year 181. At that time Zeyadatala Ben Ibrahim Ben El Aglab gave him the command of a body of troops which were despatched to the conquest of Sicily. He further relates that he departed on that mission during the Moon of Rebie Primera, in the year 212; that his force consisted of ten thousand men, nine hundred of whom were cavalry; that he conquered the greater part of the island, and that his kinsman Ased Ben Forat died at the siege of Syracuse, in the year 213. Zeyadatala wrote an account of the conquest of Sicily to the Caliph Mamoun, by the hand of the General Ased Ben El Forat.

Ben Abdallah El Aglab remained in Sicily, continuing and confirming his conquests in that island, until the year 217, when he returned to Africa with many captives, and much valuable spoil, the trophies of his great victories. But he had been in Sicily at an earlier period also, in the year 204, namely, which was eight years before the conquest made of the place, as above related. Abdallah Ben Ibrahim Abulaglab was Wali of Sicily from the year 221, and resided there all the remainder of his life.

Zeyadatala, son of Ibrahim Ben El Aglab Abu Muhamad, was appointed successor of his brother Abulabas, as Wali of Africa, in the year 221; his brother was one of the bravest and most renowned Arabs of his time, a man of much learning and genius; he was born about thirty years before Lehibatala Ibrahim El Mahedi. This Zeyadatala it was who built the Aljama of Cairvan, and who covered all its court with a beautiful pavement of marbles cut into rectangular forms; he also erected the Mihrab, which he adorned from the base to the summit with elegant inscriptions and other ornaments of much beauty. Around the Aljama, Zeyadatala furthermore caused to be constructed a strong wall built of black and white stones, polished even to brilliancy; before

the Mihrab he placed two magnificent Columns of porphyry, the colour of which was pure purple, and they were furthermore enriched with figures and damascene work of wonderful beauty. Those who have seen these Columns, whether they be men of the East or West, affirm that they know of none to equal them. The Lord of Constantinia is declared to have offered their weight in gold as their price, but for the honour of Islam this proffer was suffered to pass without any effect.

The first founder of that remarkable Aljama was Ocba Ben Nafe El Fehri, by whom the city of Cairvan was also built in the year of the Hegira 53; but when Hassan Ben Nooman El Gasani was Wali of Africa, he took down the whole, with the exception of the Mihrab, and rebuilt it immediately. It was again destroyed in the year 155, when Jezid Ben Hatim was Wali of Africa, and was once more rebuilt; but being again demolished by Zeyadatala was reconstructed by him with increased magnificence, as we have said. The work was completed in the year 222, and Zeyadatala died in the Moon Regeb of the following year.

A notable fact is recorded of Abu Ibrahim Ahmed El Safeki Ben El Aglab, which is this:—Being Wali of Africa some time preceding the year 217, the Caliph Almamoun sent a messenger to him saying that men had brought reports to the Caliph to the effect that he, the Wali, had permitted Abdallah Ben Taher Ben Alhussein, who had been Governor of Egypt and Africa, to be proclaimed from his Alminbares. El Aglab became much enraged at this, and after he had eaten and drank, he commanded that the Envoy should be brought into his presence, when he received him, standing upright, his hair and beard thrown wildly abroad, his eyes flashing, and his whole countenance terrible with rage. Seeing that the Envoy was much alarmed, he then said to him with a loud voice—"The Ameer Amumenin knows well what hath ever been my loyalty and that of my forefathers; his suspicions are therefore unjust and unreasonable. Here hath no fugitive servant, proscribed and under ban, been proclaimed from the Alminbares, although there hath been no lack of false pretensions and disquietudes, neither is there at this moment any scarcity of such." This said, the Wali extended his hand towards a bag of gold that stood near him, and taking thence one thousand dinars of gold,

all stamped with the name and impress of Edris Alhasani, he gave them to the Envoy, bidding him show them to the Caliph, that the latter might see to what extent the power of his enemies had increased in Almagreb. Finally, he appended to the reply which he despatched to his sovereign the following verses, which he wrote in two lines.

"I am as fire in the hard stone concealed; strike it, and the flame bursts forth. I am the lion, guarding his brood in the deep rock-hewn den. Let the dog bark to anger him, and lo 'tis death to the brawler.

"I am the sea; when calm, what can be milder? but the rude winds may rise, and then, rash Sailor, tempt not the wave, or fear the storm's wild fury."

It is said that the Caliph Almamun praised these verses, and was satisfied that the loyalty and good services of his Wali were not to be doubted.

El Aglab Ben Ibrahim Abu Icala, called Gezar, was the third son of Ibrahim Ben Aglab, but in virtue and excellence was the first: he succeeded him as Wali of Africa. Now Abu Alabas Abdallah had made a compact to the effect that he should be the successor of his father in office, but being in Tarabolos at the time of the old man's death, his brother Zeyadatala gained possession of power in his absence, and received the oath of obedience for himself and family; yet he did not long retain the supremacy. The second son, Abu Muhamad Zeyadatala, was he whose dominion endured the longest; he was followed by his brother Abu Ical, who was the third of the family, and was called Abu Ical El Aglab; his reign was a very short one, not having endured more than two years, nine months, and a few days. Abu Ical was the most virtuous man of his family, and was much beloved by his people; he prohibited the use of wine in Cairvan, and even the drinking of Sahba. He died at the end of the Moon Rebie, in the year 226.

To him succeeded his son Muhamad Ben El Aglab Ben Ibrahim Ben El Aglab Abulabas, who reigned fifteen years, eight months, and twelve days; he died on Monday the second of Muharram, in the year 242, being then in the thirty-sixth year of his age. This sovereign wore no beard: he was a good and honourable man, but left no son to inherit his throne. His brother Ahmed Ben Ibrahim Ben Aglab

made war on his States, and compelled him at one time to retire into the East; but Muhamad was victorious in subsequent combats, in which he was assisted by his second brother, also named Muhamad, but who was called beside Abu Abdallah. The latter became Governor of Tarabolos, where he died in the year 233, when Muhamad gave the government to one of his nephews named Abulabas, by whom his race and family were celebrated in very good verse.

Ibrahim Ben Abi Ibrahim Ahmed Ben Abi Abdallah succeeded his brother Abu Abdallah Muhamad Ben Ahmed, called El Goranic, from his love of hunting Cranes. This Muhamad was declared successor in the lifetime of his father, and the ceremony of swearing allegiance to him was solemnized with great pomp, more than fifty Alfaquis and Judges taking the oath of obedience to his person in the Aljama of Cairvan. Yet, notwithstanding this oath thus solemnly taken, when Ahmed El Goranic died, which he did six days after the completion of the Moon Giumada Primera, in the year 261, his son Muhamad was deposed by the people of Cairvan, who elected Ibrahim Ben Ahmed in his place.

But God punished those faithless people by the oppressions and injustice which he permitted Ibrahim to inflict on them, these going to such an extent that he obtained the name of "the Wicked." It is true that at the commencement of his reign he was a good sovereign, and maintained justice uprightly during seven years, but after that period he permitted the passions that were his enemies to obtain the mastery over him, shedding more blood than all the rest of his family put together. He began with his most trusted officers and familiar companions, his secretaries, ministers, &c., treating his nearest kinsmen with infinite cruelty, and not sparing the women of his own family. Ibrahim proved himself to be as avaricious and vain as he was cruel; in certain verses which he composed, he said—"We are stars, and the sons of stars; our grandfather was the Moon of Heaven. The Sun lent to us his mighty and all-inspiring influence, who hath ever arrived at the high and celestial nobility which illumines our race."

Would it might have pleased Allah that the reign of this worthless monarch had been of no longer duration than the celebrity or fame of his verses; but his rule was unhappily

dark, lasting, and evil, as a night of winter, seeing that he occupied the throne no less than twenty-nine years, five months, and eighteen days. But thus it was that God was pleased to accomplish His Divine Will.

Abi Obeid El Becri affirms that it was Ibrahim Ben Ahmed who built Medina Roqueda, and tells us that he established his Court there, having removed it from Medina Alcazar Cadim. He constructed palaces in Roqueda, with an Aljama of great magnificence and wonderful beauty. That city then continued to be the Court and Royal dwelling of the Beni Aglab, until Zeyadatala was deposed and driven thence by Abdallah El Xiyei, General of Obeidala El Mahedi. This Mahedi also held his Court there for a certain time, but eventually removed it to Mahedia, whither he also transported the inhabitants. The deserted city was then subjected to the process of destruction through all the remainder of his time, and when Aben Ismail occupied the throne, the little yet standing was also destroyed, even the ruins being razed, insomuch that nothing was left of Roqueda but a few gardens. Yet there is not in all the land of Africa a more agreeable site, a purer or more delicious air, a more healthy climate, or a more pleasant temperature than might be found at Roqueda. It is related of this place that a Prince of the House of the Beni Aglab had been attacked by a malady which deprived him of sleep for many nights, when his Ishac or Physician, who was a native of Atrifal, advised him to pass his time in the fields, and take much exercise, which he did; and when he arrived at the site on which Roqueda afterwards stood, he fell into a sound sleep, whereupon there was a country palace or house of recreation erected there for the use of the Princes of that family.

When Ibrahim Ben Ahmed built and peopled Roqueda, he permitted the sale of wine in that city, while he forbade it in Cairvan. Of this a certain wit of Cairvan made a complaint, and said—"O Lord of men and Son of our Rulers! how submissive and resigned are we to thy sovereign will, since by this alone wine is a prohibited Harem in our city, while it is a permitted Halel in Roqueda."

Abu Ishac El Raquiqui informs us that during the reign of this Ibrahim, literature flourished and was pro-

tected in Africa, where an exquisite taste for the fine arts likewise prevailed at that period. The same author relates that Becre Ben Hemad El Taharti, requiring to approach the person of the king for the purpose of presenting a supplication, the servants said to him—"This morning at sunrise hath the king betaken himself to his gardens to take recreation with his female slaves, and it is not permitted to seek him there, seeing that this is not a day for matters of business."

Thereupon Taharti took roses which were to be presented to the king and his slaves, and on those flowers he wrote the following verses:—

The fair! the witching fair!
They, e'en though slaves,
Do rule their Lord, and render him their Thrall.
They make the bane of man; yet, seek we roses
When neither field nor garden more supplies them?
The lovely flower! on their bright cheeks we find them
Sweeter and without thorns. This then, my plaint
Being on roses written, I do look
To have received with favour, since 'tis formed
Of that which is the image of their cheeks—
The fair! the witching fair!

The verses were read and applauded; some of the slaves even set themselves to sing them, and El Taharti obtained what he had asked, with the addition of an order for one hundred Dinars.

The King Ibrahim Ben Ahmed El Aglab had placed his cousin, Muhamad Ben Zeyadatala, a man of much learning and excellence, who was the friend of all the wise, in the government of Tarabolas. The father of this Muhamad had been the Wali of Africa, an office in which he had succeeded his brother, Ahmed Ben Muhamad, who was a profound politician, and a very prudent Councillor of his King, qualities which he had acquired under the Cadi Suleiman Ben Amran. He was accustomed to say that Zeyadatala El Saguir,* for so did he call Muhamad Ben Zeyadatala, to distinguish him from his father Zeyadatala Ben Ibrahim,

* Although El Saguir signified the last in order, yet this Zeyadatala was but the second of his name; another followed, and he was the last, that Dynasty ending in his person.—*Condé*.

before mentioned, was the wisest and best Prince of the Beni Aglab. But the King Ibrahim Ben Ahmed abhorred his cousin, the Wali of Tarabolos, and the latter for his part did not greatly love his cousin the king; wherefore, excited by certain enemies of Ibrahim, who had been grievously offended by that monarch, Muhamad Ben Zeyadatala sent a Cadi to Almoatedhid, the Caliph of Bagdad, with complaints of the tyranny and cruelty practised by Ibrahim.

Then the Caliph, as we are informed by the historian Abu Ishac Ibrahim Ben El Casim, who is known as El Raquiqui, wrote to Ibrahim from Irak, telling him that he was astonished at the cruelties and evil deeds attributed to him: he advised the king to restrain the disposition which he had to shed blood, and exhorted him to retain his cousin, the son of his uncle, even Muhamed Ben Zeyadatala, who was lord of the country, in the government of Medina Tarabolos.

With these letters, and furnished by envious foes of his cousin with intelligence respecting the complaints sent to the Caliph, Ibrahim repaired to Tarabolos, pretending that he was on his way to Egypt, and giving evidence of very friendly dispositions towards the governor his cousin, until, supping with him in his palace, he obtained possession of his person, when he put him to death, and afterwards fixed his body to a stake; nay, with such odious cruelty did he proceed against him, that he seized and put to death all his children—sons and daughters, great and small; furthermore commanding that such of the wives and slaves of his cousin as were pregnant should be ripped up. These barbarous and inhuman atrocities were committed in the year 283; and all was done with such extraordinary celerity that, from the time of the king's arrival in Tarabolos to that of his departure, fifteen days only had elapsed. Abu Aly Husein Ben Abi Said El Cairvani informs us that the Prince Mohamad had written a book entitled the "Recreation of Hearts," with another called the "Book of Flowers." He also mentions certain of the poems composed by that prince, and adds that he left a history of the Beni Aglab composed wholly by himself.

The king Ibrahim Ben Ahmed declared his son Abdallah Ben Ibrahim Abulabas, successor to his kingdom. The prince was a brave and prudent man, well skilled in the art of war, seeing that his father had caused him to be exercised therein

from his earliest childhood. He lived in continual terrors and alarms during the lifetime of his father, because of the odious cruelties which that monarch was constantly practising on all his kindred, and knowing that, even with the utmost submission and care, it was very difficult to keep at peace with so malignant a disposition as that of the king Ibrahim. But the latter was in no manner harsh towards Prince Abdallah himself; he used his services in all his wars, and distinguished him among all his brothers because of his discretion, bravery, and good fortune in the various enterprises he had undertaken.

No sooner had Ibrahim declared Abdallah his successor than he resigned to him the royal seat; and the day on which the decree to that effect went forth was Juma, the eighth before the commencement of the moon Rebie Primera, in the year 289; the same day on which the Caliph Almoatedhid departed from life. He was succeeded by his son Almoktefibila.

In the moon Dylcada of that year King Ibrahim himself also died, and during the night of his death there were seen in the sky an innumerable mass of stars, which were dispersed like rain, and were cast off to right and left through all the realms of space. That year was called the Year of the Stars, from this circumstance.

King Abdallah Ben Ibrahim reigned one year and fifty-two days, days which were all passed in the exercise of rectitude, justice, and humanity. But heaven did not grant his presence for more than that short period: the virtuous king was assassinated in the night of Wednesday, the last day of the moon Xaban, in the year 290. This crime was committed by his own son Zeyadatala, who had long been kept by his father in a state of banishment, and lived almost as a prisoner in the island of Sicily. He, then, it was who, with barbarous and wicked malice, sent orders to three Sicilian slaves to murder the king, which inhuman deed was executed by those miscreants while Abdallah was sleeping in his bed. The three murderers then proceeded to Sicily with the head of their sovereign, and were rewarded for their atrocious obedience by being instantly impaled, and exposed on stakes to the eyes of all men.

This Zeyadatala, the son of Abdallah Ben Ibrahim, was the last king of the Beni Aglab, since the sovereignty of that house was brought to an end in his person by Obeidala, called Mahedi,* first of the Axiyeis kings, or those of the house of Axiyie. This happened when the brave general Abu Abdallah El Xiyei, contending for the pretensions of Obeidala, defeated the army of Zeyadatala the murderer, which he did on Saturday, six days before the commencement of the moon Giumada Postrera, in the year 296, when he took Medina Elerbas at the point of the sword. The news of that event reached Zeyadatala at the hour of evening prayer on the following day, and he fled before the conquerors, to whom the whole country willingly surrendered, because the people had no affection for their king, who proceeded with all haste to seek a shelter in Tarabolos, which is on the right bank of the Dias Misr and the confines of Egypt. The reign of Zeyadatala was six years, two months, and some days, all which time he spent in the vain delights and amusements of Medina Roqueda, which had been built and peopled by his grandfather Ibrahim, who had taken much pains to beautify the place and render it agreeable. Crystal waters there flowed in abundance, and the king planted a rich diversity of fruit trees, with shaded avenues of delicious coolness: myrtles, and other aromatic trees and shrubs, also added their attractions to the place. The two palaces or Alcazars seated there were surrounded by a high wall; one of these edifices was called Bagdad, the other the Mochtar; they were larger than those of Cairvan, and the distance between the two cities was six miles. During the reign of this last Zeyadatala there was a Soriha, or vast reservoir, constructed at Roqueda by command of that sovereign. It was five hundred brazos long and four hundred wide. From this Soriha there proceeded a spacious canal forming a clear lake: it

* Mahedi. This word signifies a guide or director of men, a title assumed by many ambitious impostors, in allusion to a strange prediction current among the Arabs, according to which the sun is to rise in the West. This they explain to mean a religious and political revolution, to commence in Almagreb, or the western coast of Africa. With this title Obeidala founded the dynasty of the Fatemite or Ismaelite Caliphs.—*Condé.*

was called the sea, and in the midst of its waters was erected a beautiful pavilion or palace called the Arus. The structure was raised on four groups of columns, each group consisting of numerous pillars, and on that edifice Zeyadatala expended two hundred and thirty-two thousand dinars of gold, to say nothing of the fines inflicted on the Jews and Agemies, or Christians, which are not here included, although they also went to increase the funds for that work.

Of this palace Obeidala El Mahedi was wont to say that it was the first and principal of the three wonderful things which he had seen in Africa; and he affirmed that the like of it was not to be found, either in the East or West. In the construction and enjoyment of this magnificent fabric there was indeed effected and realized what Abulfathi El Busti had said on another occasion.

1st. "While the king vainly squandereth his means and his time in the completion of his dwelling and amid the vain pleasures accumulated therein, the fatal hand of a dark destiny is demolishing his state and greatness."

2nd. "Yet in the delicious indolence of that fair retreat, no warning soundeth in his ear; the clangour of the battle and the cry of the warrior approach him not."

But all these beauties and treasures were lost in one unhappy day to Zeyadatala, who, being compelled to leave all and flying into Egypt, there died a violent death. Obeidala was proclaimed Caliph in Roqueda in the commencement of the moon of Rebie Primera in the year 297. Thus, then, in the person of that wicked prince, concluded the reign of the house of the Beni Aglab, after a duration of one hundred and twelve years. The Beni Madrez subsequently reigned in Sigilmesa during one hundred and sixty years, the Beni Rustam ruled in Tahart for the space of one hundred and thirty years.

Now the Prince Mogbar, Ben Ibrahim Ben Sofian, of whose fate we are about to speak, was of the house of Aglab; and his uncle, the King Ibrahim Ben Ahmed, had given him the government of Elarbosa: but in an obstinately contested game of chance which they were playing together, Ibrahim became so enraged against his nephew that he banished him to the island of Sicily. This Mogbar

commanded the land and sea forces which appeared at Messina after the battle of Milaso; he was on his way to Calabria when he fell into the hands of the people of Roum, who carried him captive to Constantinia, where he died in prison. This prince wrote verses in his captivity, which he sent to his home: they are lamentations, which commence as follows:—

> "Who would have dared predict the dismal fate
> Reserved for my brave hearts of Alcairvan
> By ruthless Fortune," &c. &c.

And which concluded thus:

> "But He who guarded Jusuf from pale death,
> He who supported Ayûb in his sorrows,
> He who saved Ibrahim from kindling flames,
> And in the halls of Pharaoh gave to Muza
> The conquering rod that foiled the magic power
> Of Egypt's wisest; He shall give me patience
> As He hath given me hope."

Muhamad Ben Hamza was the general whom Zeyadatala Ben Ibrahim despatched to take Mansur El Tombuzi in his palace of Mahamedia; but Hamza was conquered and died in that battle, which was not well sustained on his part, seeing that the troops had but little affection either for the king or his general. The Hagib of Ibrahim Ben Ahmed and of his son Zeyadalata was Ahmed Ben Muhamad Chamza, to whom they both confided all matters of business. He was, indeed, a very wise counsellor, and it was he who was accustomed to say that "not all which our enemies concert against us is permitted to come to pass; that which is to happen, whether for good or evil, hath already been decreed by God before it hath been thought of either by our friends or enemies."

The Sahib El Barid, or Chief of the Forenicos, or Couriers, of King Zeyadalata was Abdallah Ben Asayeg, and of him Aben Ishac El Raquiqui relates as follows. A few days before the downfall and flight of King Zeyadalata, that monarch said to one of his singers, "Canst thou not sing for me some couplet or air which I have not yet heard?" and the singer replied, "My lord, I know one stanza only, nay, of that but the half, since I cannot recall the first hemistich." Then

the king commanded him to recite what he could remember, and he sang accordingly the following words:

"Already doth the raven's wing*
News of our separation bring."

At this moment the Sahib El Barid, Abdallah Ben Asayeg, arrived, and knowing that he was a good poet as well as a man of learning, the king told him the singer's oblivious-ness, and asked if he knew the lines required. Full of horror at the fatal intelligence which he had come to impart, Abdallah replied: "Never have I known aught in my life that hath equalled this! The words omitted by the singer are these:—

"For suffering hours prepare thy heart,
Grief and dismay be now thy part.
Already doth the raven's wing
News of our separation bring."

"And there, my lord, is the stanza."

Accordingly, a few days only had elapsed before Zeyadalata was compelled to fly from the face of his enemies, with the loss of his throne, which was followed almost immediately by that of his life.

CHAP. LXXVI.—OF THE KINGS OF THE XIYEIS RACE WHO APPEARED IN AFRICA TOWARDS THE CLOSE OF THIS CENTURY.

THE first of these sovereigns was Obeidala, called the Mahedi Abu Muhamad. According to Razi his true origin and parentage were never clearly ascertained; some call him the son of Muhamad Ben Abderahman El Bosri, of Medina Salameya; others say that his father was Muhamad Ben Ismael Ben Giaffar, Ben Muhamad Ben Aly

* The Bedouin Arabs profess to remark that when they are about to strike their tents and depart from their pasture grounds, there invariably appears a raven, whom they therefore call the Bird of Separation: the necessity for making a great preparation of food, as the time for these journeys approaches, cannot fail to attract birds to devour the remains: their poetry is consequently full of allusions to such occurrences, and of the inferences drawn from them.—*Condé.*

Ben Husein, Ben Aly, Ben Abi Taleb: but there are others, and those who are the most worthy of faith, who declare, in the words of Abulcasim Ahmed Ben Ismael El Razi El Haseni, "By Allah, this Obeidala is not of our race at all! He is known only by his deeds." The same thing is affirmed by Abu Becri Ben El Teib El Baquillani.

The Egyptian genealogists have made more exact researches into the true origin and parentage of this ruler; and Aben Abi Taher, in his History of Bagdad, sets forth that Obeidala Ben Abdallah Ben Salem, the rebel or insurgent, who had put himself forward in the territory of Cairvan, was a freed-man of Aben Sindan El Baheli; that he joined himself to certain merchants of Salameya, with whom he traded in copper and other metals in that city: that when the Carmati rose up in Syria he joined their insurrection, but subsequently fled, first to Egypt and then to Algarbe, giving himself to be known in the West as El Bosri. So far Aben Taher: El Razi tells us that Muhamad the son of Obeidala, he who was afterwards known as Abulcasim, entered with him into Cairvan; but these various authors are not agreed either in the origin or the name of Obeidala, any more than in the name of his son, whom some call Abderahman, and these say that Muhamad was his preceptor. Others tell us that Obeidala was of the Beni Hassan Ben Aly, but that Abderahman, who succeeded him in his usurped throne, was of the Beni Husein Ben Aly Ismaeli; they add that Obeidala Ben Abdallah married the mother of Abulcasim, who was called Rumia, and was of the family of Ben Husein, and that the youth was named Abulcasim, Abderahman, Muhamad, and Abu Giaffar: nay, it is sometimes affirmed that he was called Hassan also. Furthermore we find it related that he accompanied Obeidala his father from Syria into Egypt, where the latter awaited his auxiliaries from the tribes of Yemen and Barca, and subsequently passed with his most trusted followers into Magreb, where he was joined by the people of Barbary; but that the foundation stone of his greatness was laid by Abu Abdallah El Xiyei, who, by the battle in which he defeated the army of Zeyadatala El Aglab, thus made Obeidala master of Roqueda, while the brother

of Abdallah, even Abulabas, became Wali of Zab and other districts in that part of Africa.

Yet no long time after, as we are further informed, Obeidala, in return for their important services, caused the two brothers, Abdallah and Abulabas, which last was the elder, to be assassinated, having hired for that office a certain Arubato El Cutemi, when their bodies were buried in the garden of the Alcazar. This happened on a Tuesday towards the end of the moon Dylhagia, in the year 298; and the murderer, Arubato El Cutemi, was himself put to death by command of Obeidala, no long time afterwards, with circumstances of atrocious cruelty.

Some time having elapsed from the occurrence of these events, Obeidala began the building of Medina Almahedia, and, as it is said, on Saturday, the fifth day of the moon Dylcada in the year 303. The site of the town being marshy, he took measures for draining and rendering it firm. He surrounded the place with strong walls, which he furnished with lofty towers well fortified, peopling the city with men devoted to his service, and erecting a very magnificent Alcazar. Obeidala commenced his residence at Mahedia in the year 308, after he had taken possession of Almagreb, the district of Tarabolos, Barca, and the Island of Sicily: Obeidala declared that the successor to his power was his son Abulcasim Alcayembimrila. This son he twice sent into Egypt; the first time being in the year 301, when Abulcasim seized Alexandria, Alfiûm and a part of Saida, having accomplished which he returned to Magreb, where he arrived in the year 302.

Obeidala did not cease to extend his conquests from this time to that of his death, which took place in the middle of the moon Rebie Primera, in the year 322. His reign, counting from his arrival in Roqueda and the oath of allegiance tendered to him there, endured twenty-four years, two months, and twenty days; but others, who reckon from the time when he appeared triumphant in Sigilmesa to that when he died at Mahedia, make his Caliphate twenty-five years, three months, and three days. Obeidala was sixty-two years old at the time of his death, according to those who say that he was born at Salameya or at Bagdad in the year 279 or 278.

Abu Obeid El Becri relates of this Obeidala that after having assassinated Abu Abdallah El Xiyei and his brother Abulabas, he gave himself the title of Imaum, and wrote letters exhorting all the people of Almagreb to submit themselves to his rule. They add that he was the first who in those countries assumed the appellation of Ameer Amumenin, or Prince of the Faithful, as did the Caliphs of Bagdad, and they affirm that he was also the first in Africa who coined money of gold and silver with those august titles.

Obeidala also wrote letters in a very insolent manner to the Wali Said Ben Salhi, of Medina Nocôr and its Comarcas, which he ruled, for the House of Meruan, commanding Said to appear and offer allegiance to himself, and warning him that if he did not obey readily there would be cause for sorrow, since if he, Obeidala, took the city of Nôcor by the sword, there should no man be left alive therein. At the end of the letter he added the following verses:—

1. "If thou come to my footstool in peace, So in peace shall thy footsteps depart, and my clemency shall not be wanting.

2. "But essayest thou to meet me in fight, Then beware of the sword that I wield, for its conquering edge shall soon teach thee—aye, and thine—that humility only, can save from the flames of my wrath."

To this an Andalusian writer, a native of Toledo, known as El Achmis, replied, by order of Said Ben Salhi, in the following lines, of which the metre was as that written by Obeidala:—

1. "By the dwelling of Allah I swear, that thy vanity blinds thee, oh madman! that thy words have no sense, and thy purpose, How baseless and foolish it is!

2. "What art Thou but an ignorant varlet, lying prone on the brink of thy fate? Oh, Barbarian, impious and vile, without thought of Islam or of God!

3. "We! the followers of Mahomet, scorn thee! We proceed on the path of the Just, and we doubt not that Allah will punish thy demerits, and humble thy pride."

CHAP. LXXVII.—Of the war in Almagreb.

Many grievous discords and much civil war had disquieted Africa and Almagreb from the time when these evils commenced, on the invasion of the States of Fez by Muza Ben Abi Alafia, who had gone forth against Yahye Ben Edris in the year 305. In the year 313 Aben Alafia obtained possession of Fez, of Velad Teza, of Tesûl, and of the greater part of Almagreb, with the cities of Asila and Salee. The people swore allegiance to him, and proclaimed him their sovereign; but some of the Xeques and tribes of the Zenetes rose up against his authority; yet whether they did so from loyalty to the house of their ancient monarchs, or from envy of this Ameer's advancement, does not appear.

By the partizans of the race of Edris, letters were written to Abderahman Anasir Ledinallah, king of Spain, entreating him to protect and assist that family now unjustly despoiled of their States: they reminded him of the friendship formerly existing between their fathers and his own, which dated from the time when the house of Edris had first settled in that part of the West. They added that the invading usurpers were a cruel and barbarous race, the equal of which was not to be found in all the wide regions of Africa, Egypt, and Barca: that it was the intention of those barbarians to possess themselves of all the States of Almagreb, and that, this done, they proposed next to pass the Strait and make an attempt upon the kingdom of Spain.

On receiving these letters, King Abderahman assembled his Council, and then replied that he would not fail to protect the sons of Edris against the usurpers of their States. He consequently dispatched his General Giaffar Ben Othman, Wali of Majorca, with the Admiral of his fleet, even Ishac Ben Ibrahim El Ocaili, to the assistance of those ancient allies of his house; when the two leaders, passing into Africa with a force of horse and foot, proceeded to act in concert with the Zenete Generals, who had remained true to the house of Edris. But as the enemies most to be feared

were the people of the Xiyei, Abderahman commanded his generals to send proposals for a coalition with Muza Ben Alafia, and seek to prevail on him to make common cause against that foe. The king also dispatched orders of similar import to the Wali Said Ben Sahli, Governor of Nocôr and its Comarcas for the Meruans.

In the year 319 the troops of Abderahman occupied the cities of Ceuta and Tangiers, being allowed to hold them as garrison towns for the security of the army of Spain acting as an auxiliary force in that country. They repaired the walls and strengthened the fortifications of both places, all in concert and accordance with the Zenete generals, for the purpose of defending the states of Almagreb in general from the incursions of those of Xiyei. Even Muza Ben Alafia affected willingness to concur with them for that purpose, and either fearing them or requiring their aid, he made an appearance of accepting the alliance offered.

The followers of Edris had meanwhile taken refuge in the fortress of Hijar Anosor, or the Rock of the Eagles; and Muza Ben Alafia, after many combats fought with various fortune, besieged them in that inaccessible hold which had been constructed by Muhamad Ben Ibrahim Ben Muhamad Ben Alcasim Ben Edris, and which concealed its lofty head amidst the clouds. Wearied, after a certain time, by the difficulties which the position of the place presented, Muza remitted the conduct of the siege to his general, Abulfeth El Tesûli, with whom he left a force of one thousand horse. He then departed to Fez, and this he did in the year 320. Alafia then remained in Fez until Hamid Ben Sobeil, General of Obeidala El Xiyei, came with a great host from Almahedia, bringing with him Hamed Ben Hamdan El Hamdani.

Now the cause which brought Hamid Ben Sobeil to Fez was as follows. When Muza Ben Alafia had left the siege of Hijar Anosor to his general Abulfeth, and had returned to Fez, he no sooner arrived in that city than he caused Abdallah Ben Thalaba Ben Muhamad Ben Abud, Governor of the Quarter called that of the Andalusians, to be put to death, appointing a brother of the murdered man to hold the government in his stead, but deposing him also a few days later, and replacing him by Towal Ben Abi Yezid, who retained the

office until the time when Fez was no longer in the power of Muza. In the Quarter of the Cairvanese Muza appointed his own son Modin to be governor.

No long time afterwards Alafia departed to Medina Telencen, taking possession of that city and all its Comarcas. Up to that period these had been held by Alhassan Ben Abi Ayxi Ben Edris El Hasani; but in this year of 319, he being thus driven out of them, fled to Medina Melila in Gezair Mulaya, resolved to defend himself in that fortress: pay, confiding no longer in the assistance of the Andalusians, he now wrote for aid to Obeidala El Xiyei. At this time, in the moon of Xaban, that is to say, of the year 320, King Abderahman Annasir, sovereign of Spain, was proclaimed at Fez and in all the cities of Almagreb; the Chotba being made for him in all their Alminbares.

The fame of these things soon reached Mahedia, and then Obeidala El Xiyei thought it time to interfere, which he did by sending his generals with a numerous host as related above. Hamid Ben Sobeil then attacking Muza Ben Alafia put him to flight, and he sought refuge with his followers in the fortress of Ain Ishac. This stronghold is in the land of Tesûl, and here Muza made good his position in the best manner that he was able to contrive. Hamed Ben Sobeil passed forward in the meantime to Fez, but before he reached that city, Modin the son of Muza fled from it, when Hamed entered the place, the government of which he gave to his second in command, Hamed Ben Hamdani. That done he returned to the province of Africa. The entrance of Hamed Ben Sobeil into Fez took place in the year 321.

Being informed of these events, Alhasan Ben Edris with his garrison came down from their Rock of the Eagles and attacked Abulfeth El Tesûli, the general of Muza Ben Alafia, whom they defeated.

But now came into action that Wali of Nocôr who had sent the copy of verses before cited to Obeidala El Xiyei, even Ahmed Ben Said Ben Abi Becri Ben Abderahman Ben Sahli, who advanced upon Fez with much diligence. Having taken the city by storm, he put seven thousand of the troops of Obeidala El Xiyei to the edge of the sword,

and took the life of Hamed El Hamdani, whose head he cut off and sent to Muza Ben Alafia, together with the captive son of Hamed; Muza on his part dispatching that head to the King Abderahman Anasir Ledinallah, who was then at Cordova.

Abderahman thereupon sent letters naming his general Ahmed Ben Becri, Amil or Governor of Fez, who consequently bore rule in that city, under the protection of his own sovereign, even Abderahman Ledinallah, and that of Muza Ben Alafia, until Maysor El Feti, General of Abulcasim El Xiyei, the son of Obeidala, came against him. But the last mentioned leader closely besieging the city of Fez, compelled Ahmed Ben Becri to make proposals of peace, which he did, going forth to the Camp of Maysor for that purpose, under security of his safe conduct, and with many rich presents for that general. Yet the latter did not scruple to take the confiding Ahmed prisoner in despite of his given word, thus breaking a sacred promise: then, placing him under the guard of a large company of soldiers, he dispatched the unfortunate Ahmed Ben Becri to Mehadia.

Maysor then held Fez closely besieged during seven months, but at length came to an agreement with the inhabitants, to the effect that they should pay him seven thousand dinars, and should proclaim himself, even Abulcasim El Xiyei, their sovereign, which they did, coining money in his name and making the Chotba for him in all their Mosques. These arranged, Maysor departed with his army to attack Muza Ben Alafia.

Alhasan Ben Edris did not fail to make use of the time thus left to him, and regained possession of the greater part of his States; while Muza Ben Alafia, constantly retreating, took refuge in Sabra, and finally withdrew to the confines of his ancient dominions, which extended from Medina Ajarsif to Medina Tekrûr, where he died, murdered, according to Bornozi, at Velad Mulaya, by his enemies, who treacherously deprived him of life in the year 328, when his sons succeeded to his states.

Other authors relate this matter somewhat differently, and assign the year 341 as that of Muza's death. These writers say that he was succeeded by his son Ibrahim, who

died in the year 350, when he also was succeeded by his son Abdallah. To Abdallah, who occupied the throne until the year 360, succeeded Ahmed, his son, who lived to the year 363, at which period the sovereignty of the Alafias of Mekineza came to an end, the family then ceasing to reign in his person.

In the year 319 there died at Saragossa Ishac Ben Abderahman Abu Abdelhomeid, a very learned man and one who lived a most austere life. He had been a Counsellor to whom all the towns of Eastern Spain had been wont to have recourse in questions of difficulty.

On a Wednesday in the moon Regib of that same year there died at Cordova the Cadi of the Aljama, Aslam Ben Abdelaziz Ben Haxem, also called Abulgaad, a man constant in prayer, of very great integrity, and close retirement of life.

In the middle of the moon Safar in the year 320, Muhamad Ben Said Ben Muza Ben Hodeira died at Cordova. After having served as Superintendent or Prefect of various Coras or districts, and as Wali of more than one province, Muhamad Ben Said had been summoned to Cordova: this had happened in the reign of Abdallah Ben Muhamad, who made him Judge of Appeal for that city. He had afterwards been superseded, but on the accession of Abderahman Anasir Ledinallah to the throne was instantly restored by that sovereign, who made him his Hagib, as the due reward of his zeal and good service. It was while holding this important charge that he died, an event which caused deep regret to the king, of whom he possessed the entire confidence: nay, from that time Abderahman could find no Hagib in whom he could trust to an equal extent.

In that same year, and also at Cordova, died Abdallah Ben Abilwalid Abulnathar, an Alfaqui distinguished for wisdom and excellence, of whom we find the following circumstance related. A short time before his death there came to him an Amil of the city, asking counsel respecting a very important order which he had just received from the king. The paper was a long one, and before reading it to the end, Abulnathar returned it to the Amil, and said, "Long before thou hadst ever received a command from the Prince of the Faithful, the Book of God had been laid before thine

eyes. Now consider which of these two ordinances is the first and most important; judge for thyself how far the secondary command agrees with the primal order, and then act without fear."

A short time after the death of this good man, Othman Ben Said El Caneni, a native of Jaen, also departed from life in that city. He was the descendant of men who had been Cadies of Medina Jaen from time immemorial. Said El Caneni was called also Har Caus; he was a wise man, of very laudable character and retired habits. Many proofs of his benevolent consideration were left by him to the poor of Jaen, and his sepulchre is one of those which are much visited by the people.

About the middle of the moon of Rebie Primera, in the year 322, there died at his city of Mahedia, the King Obeidala El Mahedi, first of the Fatemite or Ismaelite sovereigns. He was succeeded by his son Casim, called Alcayem Bimrilla; but this event did not diminish the hopes of any among the many parties then struggling for dominion in that powerful State.

CHAP. LXXVIII.—Of the incursions made upon the territories of Gallicia.

The intelligence which reached Spain respecting the fortunate results of Abderahman Anasir's interference in Africa, and the success of his arms in those districts, caused much satisfaction throughout the kingdom; but the rejoicing of the people for these news was grievously disturbed by later advices, more particularly by those received from the Wali of Merida. These made known the fact that Aben Ishac Ben Omeya, Governor of Santarem, offended by the death which had been deservedly inflicted on his brother, Muhamad Ben Ishac, by command of the King Abderahman, had forgotten his loyalty to his sovereign, and had passed over to King Radmir* of Gallicia, under whose protection he had taken shelter. He was a most noble general, and many brave

* This was Don Ramirez the Second; King of the Asturias and of Leon.—*Condé.*

leaders of the Moslemah, serving in the city which he ruled, and in its Comarcas, had taken service with the Gallician sovereign in his company. The counsels and assistance of Aben Ishac Ben Omeya had moreover emboldened the Christians of Gallicia, who had begun to make irruptions on the territory of Lusitania, their light cavalry more than once advancing to Badajos and Lisbon.

On receiving these advices, Abderahman commanded that the cavalry of Cordova and Merida should be assembled, and instantly sent Prince Almudafar to the frontier: that General departing without loss of time, and being accompanied by many cavaliers, who had requested permission to join the expedition in the quality of volunteers.

Arrived in Lusitania, Prince Aldumafar attacked and defeated the Christians of Gallicia, whom he forced to retire to the right bank of the Douro, which they did after very heavy losses. The cavalry of Almudafar then made repeated incursions into the territory of Gallicia, and occupied the whole line of the frontier, so that neither the Christians nor the rebel chief, Aben Ishac Ben Omeya, dared come forth against him. Prince Almudafar then repassed the Douro, and having restored tranquillity to the frontier, he returned by way of Merida to Cordova, bearing the rich spoils which he had gained in that expedition.

At the end of the year 324 there died at Cordova the Cadi of the Aljama, Ahmed Ben Bacqui Ben Machlad, a man of most exemplary life, nor less illustrious for his wisdom than his virtues. He died laden with years, and his death was deeply mourned by the poor and destitute, to whom he had been a refuge and consolation throughout his whole life. The bier of that good man was accompanied to the burial-ground by all the inhabitants of the city.

CHAP. LXXIX.—OF THE FOUNDATION ON MEDINA AZAHRA.

THE King Abderahman Anasir was accustomed to pass the seasons of Spring and Autumn at an agreeable and beautiful place on the banks of the Guadalquiver, distant some five or six miles from Cordova, and below that city,

the freshness and shade of the pleasant woods contiguous to the river at this point, induced the king to construct an Alcazar on the site, and to this he gradually added many splendid edifices with delicious gardens, until what had been but a country palace became transformed into a city, in the midst of which stood the royal abode or Alcazar, an elegant fabric of singularly beautiful construction. Ultimately extending the edifice still further, Abderahman gave three thousand four hundred columns formed of vari-coloured marbles, and all of admirable workmanship, for the embellishment of the same; and so vast was the size which the palace now attained that there entered each day into the construction thereof six thousand hewn stones, without counting the mass of those unhewn that were used, and the number of which was infinite.

The pavements of the Tarbeas or principal halls and apartments of the Alcazar, were of marble, some engraved and others enriched with inlaid work of extraordinary beauty, the walls being in like manner adorned with marbles, and bordered with decorations of various colours. The roofs and ceilings were enriched with ornaments of azure and gold, while the frames of the doors and other wood-work was in cedar very delicately carved. In many of the larger apartments were fountains of exquisite beauty, whence there flowed a pure, clear, and crystalline water, which fell into marble vases formed like shells, or into other basins of elegant and varied forms. In the centre of the apartment, called the Hall of the Caliph, was a fountain of jasper, from the midst of which rose a golden swan of marvellous workmanship. This bird had been executed in Constantina: it gave name to the whole work, and over that fountain of the swan there hung the renowned pearl presented to Abderahman by the Greek Emperor, and which was suspended from the ceiling.

Close to the Alcazar were the vast gardens rich with a never-ending variety of fruit-trees, diversified by groves of laurel, myrtle, and other aromatic plants, many of which were distributed along the borders of clear lakes, which offered to the view the lovely reflection of those graceful trees, with that of the heavens and their changeful display of clouds.

In the midst of these gardens, and on an elevation whence all their beauties were visible, was a pavilion, wherein the king was wont to repose when he came wearied from the chase. This pavilion was sustained by columns of white marble with beautiful capitals richly gilded; and it is related that in the centre thereof was a great vase formed of porphyry, and filled with living quicksilver, which was artificially made to rise and fall as if it had been water, and when the rays of the sun or moon fell upon it, cast forth a splendour by which the eyes of the beholder were dazzled. In these gardens were numerous baths furnished with marble reservoirs of much beauty and convenience; the carpets, curtains, and hangings of all kinds, being woven of silk and gold, were furthermore enriched with landscapes, figure sof animals, and flowers, all of such wonderful workmanship that they appeared to every one who beheld them not works of the weaver, but natural plants and living creatures. At a word, within this palace and around it were comprised all those riches and delights of this world that could be brought together for the enjoyment of a powerful monarch.

The city thus arising was called Medina Azahra, from the name of a beautiful slave whom the king loved and distinguished above all the others of his Harem.

Abderahman likewise built a mosque in the city of Medina Azahra which in beauty and elegance surpassed that of Cordova; he also caused a Zeca, or house for coining money, to be constructed there, with other vast edifices; as, for example, Casermas or barracks for his cavalry and the soldiers of his guard. The principal part of these works was completed towards the year 325, and Xaquiqui tells us that they cost incalculable sums of money.

The life-guard of King Abderahman Anasir was very numerous, consisting of not less than twelve thousand men. Four thousand of these were Sclavonians, who were infantry soldiers and held the interior of the palace; four thousand more were Africans of the Xenetes, and the remaining four thousand were Andalusians: the two last named divisions being cavalry. The Captains of the Guard were Princes of the Royal Family, or were chosen from the principal Xeques of Andalusia and Africa: the whole was divided by tribes

and companies, each having its own Casermas, and a particular period of time assigned for its service; and it was only when the king himself went forth to war that the whole body was assembled under arms.

But in addition to the guard of which, as above said, a portion was appointed to serve at different seasons, King Abderahman selected each spring and autumn the attendants whom he desired to accompany him to the abode which he had chosen for that of his then habitation. The same was done as respected his Secretaries and Viziers, his personal servants and favourite slaves, as also in regard to the learned and ingenious men by whom it was his pleasure to be surrounded. He was furthermore attended in these various changes of residence by his falconers and huntsmen, seeing that he, like his ancestors, was more than commonly attached to the pleasures of the chase in general, and of falconry in particular.

In the year 325 there appeared in the mountains of Gomera, a man named Hamim, who called himself a prophet, and by his preachings and teachings allured to follow him many of the peasants and ignorant people dwelling in those mountains and in other parts. This Hamim presented to his followers two prayers in the day, one at the rising and one at the setting of the sun, with three arraqueas or prostrations to each prayer. He gave them a law in the language of Barbary, with a prayer, which was to the following effect. "Lord, deliver us from our sins. Thou, who hast given us eyes wherewith to behold the world which thou hast created, Lord, deliver us from our sins. Thou who didst free Jonas from the belly of the whale, and Muza from the sea, Lord, deliver us from our sins." He furthermore commanded that in each of the prostrations prayer should be made for Hamim, which was himself, for Yahlaf, who was his companion, and for Teliat, a woman by whom he was in like manner ever accompanied, and who was a witch. Ten days of Ramazan and two of Xawal were to be kept as fast days, according to this man's teaching, but these fasts were not to be observed beyond the middle of each day. Yet he added various Alcaferas or acts of penance, which much enhanced the austerity of life enforced by his precepts.

He dispensed with the Alhag or religious pilgrimage, as also with the purifications of Alwoda and Atahor.* Hamim permitted his followers to eat the flesh of pigs, provided they confined themselves to that of the sow, affirming that the prohibition of the Koran extended to the boar only.

Many other peculiar practices and vain observances were prescribed by this man, who led away the people to such an extent that they brought him the Azaque or tenth of their produce, refusing to pay these tithes to the king, and resisting those who demanded from them the obedience and service due to their sovereign.

The generals of Abderahman seized this Hamim, and the king commanded that the Alfaquis should examine his doctrines; whereupon they assembled for that purpose in the Alcazar of Masamuda. The result of that examination was that the learned men condemned the doctrines of Hamim, whom they declared to be a hypocrite and impostor. They sent this declaration to the king, when he ordered that the man should be put to death without delay: which was done, his body being nailed to a cross, and his head sent to Cordova.

At the end of the year 325, Alcayem Bimrilla, the son and successor of El Mahedi, departed from Cairvan, and landing on the Island of Sicily took possession of the same. But he effected his purpose only after a cruel slaughter of the inhabitants. God alone who created them can tell the number of men whose lives were sacrificed, on the violent accession of that new lord. Many fled their native land rather than endure to become his liegemen, and these passed over for the most part to the land of Roum.

In that same year there died at Cordova, which was his native place, that wise and learned man Ibrahim El Moredi. He was consulted by people from all parts, and his fame was extended widely throughout Africa, Egypt, and the Iraks, although he never left his own country of Spain. In the same city and at the end of the same year there also died that Obeidun El Geheni, who was known as El Gomer. He was appointed Walilcoda or Chief Justice of Spain, but enjoyed his office only one day.

* The purifications of the Alwoda and Atahor are those most strenuously insisted on by the zealous Moslemah of Africa.

CHAP. LXXX.—Of the irruption made on the territory of Gallicia, and of the battle of Alhandic.

In the year 326, King Abderahman Anasir commanded his generals to assemble the forces of Andalusia, Merida, and Toledo on the frontiers of Gallicia; and this he was moved to do by the rumours of war which came from those parts, but which more particularly disquieted Lusitania. All the people who dwelt on the right bank of the Douro passed with their flocks and herds to the left shore of that river, the fears which they felt of the Christians, and their dread of the cruel onslaughts which had been made by those infidels on their lands at other times, inducing them to abandon their possessions and seek a refuge in the strong towns, fortresses, and cities.

These orders of the king put all Spain in movement: foot and horse assembled from every part, and the roads were covered with beasts of burthen, transporting provisions for the mouth, with munitions of war in every kind. At the commencement of the year 327 the Walies of the Captaincies or military districts, reported to their sovereign that the banners of all the provinces had assembled on the frontiers, and that they waited only the orders of the king to march on the enemy's country; whereupon Abderahman departed from Cordova, accompanied by his guard and the flower of his cavalry.

Prince Almudafar, the uncle of the king, likewise came forth from Merida with the cavalry of Algarve, and in the beginning of the moon Safir they both reached the host which was assembled in Salamanca and the Comarcas.

In company with his uncle, the Prince Abderahman Almudafar, the king then inspected every division of the different camps, and took counsel with him as to the order and distribution of his forces and the direction of the march. The entire army amounted to more than one hundred thousand men, who were divided into three bodies. The first of these

was led by Prince Almudafar, the second by the Wali of Badajos, Obeidala Ben Ahmed Ben Jali, Ben Wahib of Cordova, and the third by King Abderahman himself, with the Walies of Toledo, Valencia, and Tadmir. The day having been selected, the forces put themselves in movement, and passing the Douro they entered without resistance into the territory of the foe, where they produced the ravages of the tempest. Pressing constantly forward, they cut up the cultivated fields, burnt the towns, and razed the dwellings of the people to the earth, making Rebat and Amaya a desert, as they did all the other countries belonging to the Christians until they came to Medina Zamora, which had been taken by the King of Gallicia, who had fortified himself therein.

Strong even to a marvel was that city, surrounded by seven walls of ancient fabric, vast and mighty, the work of the by-gone kings. It was furthermore defended by wide and deep ditches filled with water; and all these were reinforced by the redoubtable swords of the most valiant among the Christian warriors.

Abderahman then entrusted the siege of Zamora to Abdallah Ben Gamri and to the Wali of Valencia: the Christians made impetuous sallies against the Moslemah, by whom they were as impetuously repulsed, each party meeting the other with equal bravery, and the swords of the fighting men being constantly ensanguined on either side. This commencement effected, no day then passed wherein there were not fierce conflicts and obstinate skirmishes; but the Infidels were on all occasions compelled to betake themselves to the shelter of their walls, whither they were constantly driven by the irresistible lances of the Moslemah.

Anxious to preserve so important a place, Radmir, King of Gallicia, assembled his forces, proposing to march to the relief of Zamora. Abderahman was on his part at once advised of this movement in the host of the Christians, who were reported to be descending from all the mountains of Gallicia and Alvascande: he therefore despatched Prince Almudafar with his division of the army, forty thousand strong, to the encounter of those infidels, the King himself following with an equal number of combatants, among whom went the flower of the cavalry of Spain. Abdallah Ben

Gamri, with the Wali of Valencia, the king left to maintain the siege of Zamora, the force of Ben Gamri consisting of not less than twenty thousand men.

The Campeadors or skirmishing parties of Prince Almudafar first met those of the infidel king on the banks of a river which falls into the Douro, when an action of no great importance ensued, and neither side obtaining any great advantage both retired to their camps. The following day there was a fearful eclipse, which covered the light of the sun with a dark amber-coloured shadow in the middle of the day. The minds of the young and inexperienced, who had seen nothing similar in their lives, were much troubled by that event, and two days passed during which no movement was made either by the Christians or the Moslemah; but on the third day, the brave generals of Algarve becoming impatient, arranged their forces for the battle, and Prince Almudafar having reviewed his troops, encouraged them to enter into the fight as became good Moslemah. The advance and centre he commanded himself, entrusting the right wing to the Wali of Toledo and the left to the Wali of Badajos. King Abderahman, with the generals of Tadmir and Valencia, held the reserve, the monarch proposing to bring his forces to bear wherever their presence might be most needful.

The battle did not commence until the sun had attained a considerable height, although the camps had been in movement even from the first dawn of day, since which time the clangour of trumpets had not ceased to fill the air, and the terrible cries of the two conflicting hosts had made the earth tremble and quiver to its centre. The countless array of the Christians at length came down in closely serried squadrons, when both sides pressed forward with equal animosity, and an atrocious slaughter soon commenced. On all parts the rage and fury were alike, and equal the steadiness and constancy of the combatants. Prince Almudafar, exhorting and animating his Moslemah to the fight, was seen at every point resistlessly driving on with his murderous lance, and wheeling his fierce charger about in the most thickly pressed ranks of the enemy's squadrons; he seemed to be at every part of the field in the same moment of time, and performed miracles of courage and activity. The Chris-

tians also sustained the attack of the Moslemah forces with admirable steadiness and bravery; their King Radmir with his cavalry, armed in mail, horse and man, rode down and annihilated whatever came before him. The rebel Aben Ishac Ben Omeya, with his valiant cavaliers, also armed in sounding steel, was likewise conspicuous on that day, and pressed forward through the thickest of the fight, shedding the blood of his brother Moslemah as did the most cruel of their infidel enemies.

To a foe thus experienced in war the Moslemah force was on the point of yielding; when King Abderahman, seeing many of those who fought under the banners of the right wing giving evidence of weakness, while the whole army was manifestly losing ground, threw himself with the cavalry of Cordova, and the whole strength of his guard, on the flank of the infidel host, broke through the serried squadrons of the Christian lancers, penetrated their columns with the entire weight of his cavalry, and succeeded in turning the tide of battle on that flank; his people resuming their efforts on all sides with renewed vigour.

The commander of the right wing, Aben Ahmed, being enabled to rally his troops by that aid received from their sovereign again brought their formidable ranks to the point where the strife raged most fiercely: but Aben Ahmed fighting himself in the first ranks, was struck from his horse, (and it was the third he had that day had killed beneath him); struck, I say, by a blow from a battle-axe, Aben Abed fell dying to the earth, and expired as his form touched the soil.

At the same moment there lay dying by the side of this general, and in sight of the King Abderahman, the Cadi of Valencia, Gehaf Ben Yeman, with the brave General Ibrahim Ben Davd of Cordova, who had distinguished themselves by wonders of prowess on that fearful day, and had fallen covered with wounds.

Victory was now beginning to declare itself on the side of the Moslemah, and the Christians were retiring, but still maintaining the combat and fighting as they drew back, when the arrival of the all-veiling night put an end to those scenes of horror.

The Moslemah passed the hours of darkness on the field itself, covered as it was with corpses and reeking with the

blood of men: they rested amidst the wounded and dying, who were breathing their last sigh crushed beneath the feet of the cavalry, but where they nevertheless sought repose; the living stretching their wearied limbs beside the dead, with whom they lay confused, as they waited with mingled fear and impatience for the return of the day to conclude that inhuman contest. But when the first rays of morning appeared, it was found that the Christians had retired and had even crossed the river, which they passed by various fords, without any wish to try the fate of arms on the following day.

El Mesaudi, the accomplished author of "The Golden Meadows,"* tells us that Omeya Ben Isaac had intimidated Radmir by the perfection of that knowledge in the stratagetic art which he had attributed to the Moslemah generals, as well as by an exaggerated description of their force and numbers. He had affirmed that none who came from the Arab lands could be trusted in any war, seeing that when they seemed most depressed and on the point of defeat, it was then they were most prepared to ensure the discomfiture of their foes by sudden onslaughts and concealed ambush, or other stratagems of war. It thus happened that Radmir hearing trumpets sound on the field where the Moslemah remained, some time before the dawn of the day succeeding the battle, had been thereby induced to continue his retreating movement, and the rather as these menacing sounds seemed to proceed from many points at once, while the vast number of Moslemah banners still floating over the field, and looking more than ever formidable in the uncertain glimmer of the morning twilight, appeared to inspire terror into the hearts of his infidel followers. He departed therefore from that blood-drenched field, and thus did God deliver the Moslemah from the power of those misbelievers; nor did he deprive Radmir of the victory only, for by the loss of that battle the Christian king was prevented from proceeding as was his purpose to the relief of Zamora. But who can enumerate the amount of the slain in that combat? God alone hath kept the number of the dead!

The departure of the enemy was soon perceived by the

* Prados Aureos.

host of Abderahman, but it was not thought advisable to send the Moslemah in pursuit, and the king, leaving some few squadrons of cavalry to hold the passes of the river, returned with the remainder of his forces to the siege of Zamora. Rude combats were then again delivered beneath the lofty walls, the besieged defending themselves and their towers with a desperate valour. Not a step was taken, not an inch of ground obtained, but at the cost of life to many a brave Mosleman; but now that the King and Prince Almudafar had returned to their aid, the forces pressed on the siege with renewed eagerness, and succeeded at length in making a breach through the wall. By this there now entered a large body of the Moslemah troops, who found themselves in a broad level space through the midst of which there flowed a deep and ample canal or ditch filled with water. This the Christians defended with the bravery of despair. The cloud of arrows that here filled the air was terrible as the wing of the tornado; frightful was then the carnage: the valiant Christians fell dead by thousands on the place they would not resign, and the Moslemah, no less brave, that day died in equal numbers, obtaining those rich rewards and copious recompenses reserved for all whose prowess had been displayed to the death in that holy war.

The banners of Algarve and Toledo had pressed forward among the earliest at that point, and their bodies at length filled up the fosse, thus serving as a bridge over which their Mosleman brethren passed to victory; for the Christians, not being able to resist the impetuosity of the attack, resigned their lives to the swords that were so eagerly thirsting for their blood, each dying in his place, as became a brave man. The gore of these Infidels and that of the Moslemah reddened and dyed all the waters of the fosse, so that they seemed like a river of blood.

The walls still remaining were scaled in part, and in part had their iron clasped gates forced asunder, when the banners of Islam were given to float on every tower. The conquerors possessed themselves of the city, and abstained from destroying the lives of the women and children alone: all beside perished.

Such was the renowned battle of Alhandic, or of the Fosse of Zamora: as sanguinary a one for the victors as for the van-

quished. It took place in the moon of Xawal in the year 327, as did that fought by Abderahman and Radmir, which took place, as hath been related, three days after that eclipse by which the minds of both hosts had been troubled. Mesaudi affirms that the number of Moslemah slaughtered in that expedition was in his time declared at Fostat in Egypt, where Mesaudi then had his abode, to be but little short of fifty thousand.

CHAP. LXXXI.—Of the return of Abderahman Anasir to Cordova, and of other events.

The King of Spain having thus obtained security on his frontier, and given orders for the reparation of those heavy damages sustained by the walls of Zamora, departed with his army to Merida, where he was received with acclamations of triumph. He there dismissed the banners of Toledo, Tadmir, and Valencia, conferring appropriate rewards on the generals who had distinguished themselves in that arduous Gallician struggle: to the younger men the king presented horses, arms, and magnificent robes; while to the older Xeques, officers, and cavaliers, he gave Alcaidias or Governments. That of Seville, for example, was conferred on Ismael Ben Badr Ben Ahmed Ben Zayda, known as Abu Becri, a distinguished cavalier of Cordova.

When Abderahman had reposed for some time at Merida, he proceeded to Cordova, accompanied by his Viziers and the Alcaides of his guard, when the day of his entrance into that city was kept as one of festival and general rejoicing. The king now made Giafar, the son of Gehaf Ben Yeman, Cadi of Valencia, partly in consideration of his own merits, and partly as an acknowledgment of the services rendered by his father, who had died fighting at the battle of Zamora as we have related.

In the year 328, twelve days before the close of the moon Giumeda Primera; the renowned Cordovan, Ahmed Ben Mohamad Abdrabihi, departed from life in his native place. He was a learned man and elegant poet of that day, and had celebrated in his verses the four kings, Muhamad, Almondhir, Abdallah, and Abderahman Anasir: his ingenious

compositions made the delight of Cordova, and were the honour of the poets of Andalusia. Prince Alhakem formed a collection of his works, which was divided into twenty parts, and the illustrious editor gave these parts singular titles; as for example, "The Heaven," "The Stars," "The Dawn," "The Day," "The Night," "The Garden," "The Cloud," "Love," "Repentance," "The Gazelle," and others of equally peculiar choice. Ahmed had first seen the light on the tenth of the moon Ramazan in the year 246: thus he had waited for death eighty-one years, eight months, and eight days.

The wise and erudite poet, Yahye Ben Hudheil, informs us that Ahmed Ben Muhamad was induced to devote his thoughts to poetry by the following circumstance. Soon after the death of his father, Muhamad Ben Abdrabihi, Ahmed was passing through a certain street in Cordova, when he saw a bier issuing from one of the houses, and perceiving it to be followed by a large number of persons, he enquired whom it was that they were about to inter.

"How!" replied the party questioned, "You do not know that here resided the Poet of Cordova, and that he is now dead?"

Hearing this, Ahmed followed the funeral, and seeing the profound regret exhibited by that vast concourse, he conceived an ardent wish to be himself a poet; he returned to his home with his mind so full of that subject as to be able to think of nothing else. That night he had a dream, wherein he appeared to be standing at the door of a house which those around informed him was that of the renowned author and poet Alhassan Ben Heni: he then knocked at the door, and there came forth to open it Alhassan himself, who looked upon him with eyes full of friendship and approval. Thereupon he awoke and could sleep no more until the dawn, when he arose.

Having then consulted his friends respecting this dream, they all assured him that he would in time become a good poet, as was intimated by the approving look with which Alhassan Ben Heni had regarded him: thereupon the young Ahmed Ben Muhamad devoted himself to the study of measures, and did in effect acquire much reputation for his abilities as a poet. His first studies were made in the

School or Academy of the highly renowned Abu Amer Ahmed Ben Said, who was the Vizier and intimate friend of King Abderahman: his house was open to all learned men, but more especially to ingenious poets, whom he powerfully aided and favoured in all ways.

The palace of this noble Vizier was indeed the resort of all who desired to put themselves forward in the domain of intellect, and was, as we have said, considered to be a kind of Academy. It was there that the following anecdote was first related by the Andalusian Said Ben Ahmed Ben Chalad. That traveller, being in the East, was once in an assembly of learned men where poetry was discussed among other subjects, and many elegant verses were recited. Then some of those present remarked to Said, "It is not just that you should conceal from us the works produced by your good poets of Andalusia, as the full moon doth not conceal herself in the darkness of night." Thereupon Said recited to them several poems written by the poets of Spain, and those verses were applauded and admired by all: but there were certain Egyptians present who said, "But where, among all your poets of Spain, will you find one like Alhassan Ben Heni?"

Said Ben Hamad then recited to the company certain verses which he had retained in his richly stored memory, and which had been composed by the Andalusian poet, Yahye Ben Hakem El Gazali. All expressed their admiration, but ended by saying, "Honour to Hassan, and honour also to the Gazali, for neither can be said to stand before the other."

At the same time there were assemblies of the learned held in the house of the Cadi Aben Zarb, and these also were assiduously frequented. Aben Asbag, Aben Thalaba, and many other wise men of the city, often made a part of the company, as did sometimes Muhamad Ben Moavia, El Coraixi, and the Vizier Aben Said, with Ahmed Ben Almutaraf, Muslema Ben Casim, and others of the highest nobility. In the house of the Vizier Iza Ben Ishac, and in that of Chalaf Ben Abes El Zahrawi, both renowned for their knowledge in all sciences, but more especially for their learned medical works, were held the assemblies of men devoted to the study of the physical sciences, to astronomy, to the various branches of the mathematics, and to all others con-

nected with the exact sciences. Iza Ben Ishac and Chalaf Ben Abes were both physicians to King Abderahman: but they were men of so much virtue and benevolence that their houses were open to the poor day and night, and the courts of their dwellings were constantly filled with the suffering, who came to consult them respecting their maladies.

At the end of the year 328 there died at Cordova that true servant of his master, Ibrahim Ben Hikel El Caisi, called on account of his native place El Chuzeni, a man of a most praiseworthy life as well as of distinguished bravery. He had accompanied and attended the Prince Almudafar through many a sanguinary combat, being constantly employed by him to carry his orders to the generals and different banners on the field of battle..

CHAP. LXXXII.—Of the battle of Gormaz, and the truce made with the Christians.

After the defeat of the Christians at Zamora, their king retired for the time, but soon descended once more from his mountains with numerous forces, and making irruptions on all those districts of Lusitania which are watered by the Douro. He attacked the general commanding on that frontier, Abdallah El Coraixi, when the Moslemah were in their turn defeated, and the infidels, taking possession of Medina Zamora, put all the Moslemah who defended the place to the edge of the sword.

These unhappy news filled King Abderahman with sorrow, and he wrote to his Walies in the Captaincies of Toledo and Merida, commanding them to send their banners to the frontiers of Gallicia. That done he dispatched the cavalry of Andalusia to the same place, charging the general Abdallah to avenge the injuries inflicted on his people by the Christians, and ordering him to make a cruel war of fire and blood on those misbelievers.

The Moslemah forces being assembled accordingly, were led to the frontier by the Wali Abdallah El Coraixi, when those of Gallicia did not hesitate to come forth against them. The place wherein the two armies first met was a

narrow strip of land bordered on one side by the Douro and on the other by abrupt eminences and rocky defiles, so that they were compelled to an engagement by their position, and the Coraixi took care to remind his troops that their best hope was in their valour, their only chance for safety in the victory which he trusted to see them obtain.

"See on one hand the Douro pours its flood,
And on the other crags are piled to Heaven.
Our safety is in conquest, and our hope
Our brave hearts and the good right arm we raise.

On, then, and let the blood of Infidels
Deep tinge the Douro with a crimson glow."

A sanguinary contest ensued accordingly, and the Moslemah, remaining victors, made a fearful carnage among the Christians, avenging the destruction of their brothers, and causing the Douro to run red, as their general had exhorted, with the blood of the vanquished. They took the fortress of Sanestefan* de Gormaz by storm, and the number of infidels who there died, God only knows it! That battle of Sanestefan was fought in the year 329. Abdallah El Coraixi then proceeded to Zamora, taking that place also by assault with fearful loss to the garrison defending it, but few of whom escaped from the swords of the Moslemah, which were still thirsting eagerly for blood.

By the accounts of these fortunate events in Gallicia, Abderahman was to some extent consoled for the less favourable intelligence received from his generals in Africa, where the sons of Eris, confiding more implicitly in the assistance proffered them by the Fatimite generals than by those of Andalusia, had remained undecided between those two parties: but on the death of Muza Ben Alafia, which enabled them to recover nearly the whole of those territories whereof he had despoiled them, they took less pains to conceal their distrust of the Andalusian monarch, and suffered it to be known that they did not believe the auxiliaries sent by Abderahman to be of sincere intentions.

About this time Aben Ishac Ben Omeya fell into strife with the king of Gallicia: the latter having given him cause to be-

* St. Stéphen.

lieve that his services were undervalued and his counsels distrusted. Aben Ishac therefore wrote to his legitimate sovereign Abderahman, entreating to be once more received to favour, and excusing his past errors by the declaration that he thought himself obliged to avenge the blood of his brother; but adding that he was at length convinced of his mistake, seeing that he now clearly perceived the death of that illustrious Wali to have been merited. He ended by expressing his hope that Abderahman would now give him the opportunity of proving his repentance and showing himself to be a loyal subject and good Mosleman. The king accepted his apologies accordingly, and receiving him again into favour, made him general of the frontier with the dignity of Vizier.

In this year of 329 the Cadi of Badajoz, Salomon Ben Coraixi, a learned man of great virtue and excellence, died at the city above named, his death being much lamented by all the inhabitants of that place and its Comarcas. The illustrious poet Abes El Solehi also died that year: he was so called from the valley of Soleh in the Comarca of Seville, where he was born; but he likewise bore the name of El Talicki, or of Talica, an ancient city also in the neighbourhood of Seville. Another person of eminence who died in the same year was Chalaf Ben Basil, El Firixi, celebrated through all the East for his great acquirements: he departed from life at Firix, a town of Granada.

In the year 330, King Abderahman, remarking the love of letters displayed by his son the Prince Alhakem, and knowing the great fame for learning and wisdom enjoyed by Ismail Ben Casim Abu Aly, El Cali, sent his messengers, entreating that Sage to come to his court and establish himself at Cordova, offering him his own Alcazar for his residence or that of the prince his son, for whom he desired to receive the advantage of his presence. Ismail Ben Casim was a native of Menar-Gend in Diarbeker: he was admired and honoured by all the wise men of Persia, Syria, and the Iraks: he had lived in Bagdad since the year 303, and was there so implicitly trusted by the Caliphs that they sent to ask his advice if a fly did but pass over their beards. Yet Abderahman now made to Ben Casim proposals so flattering as well as advantageous, that he consented to establish himself in Spain, and arrived in Cordova during the year 330, as we

have said. His wisdom was much admired there, and his genius highly applauded: the poetry that proceeded from his pen was the delight of every man who read it; but more than all else was he valued for the benevolence of his disposition and the excellence of his heart. No long time after his arrival Ben Casim presented to the king his renowned book called Nueder, which was filled with very elegant compositions in prose and verse: his house was frequented from the first day of his arrival in Cordova by the most learned and distinguished men of the Capital, among whom he selected as his especial friends the ingenious Jusuf Ben Harum El Kendi of Rameda in Algarve, respecting whom Ismail Ben Casim was wont to say that the principles and commencement of poesy had ever been and still was Kenda; wherein he alluded to Amrulkeis, to Motenabi, and to the Spaniard Jusuf El Kendi, who had written an admirable poem on the arrival of Ismail Ben Casim in Spain.

In that same year of 330 there departed to the East the Cadi Mondhir Ben Said El Boluti, with his brother, Fadlallah Ben Said, both of Cordova, and each greatly esteemed for his admirable qualities by the King Abderahman.

The learned Andalusian, Abdallah Ben Jonas El Moredi, a man highly celebrated for the eloquence of his writings, died this year in Cordova.

In Africa there rose up against the Fatemite sovereigns the rebel Abu Yezid, by whom their troops were defeated, and who occupied a great part of their states. Abu Yezid besieged the king Alcayem Bismillah in Mahedia, and the siege enduring a very long time, Alcayem departed from life before its conclusion; but his death was concealed by his son Ismail, called Mansur Bila, who succeeded him, and who, conquering Abu Yezid, recovered his dominions.

The King Radmir of Gallicia now sent his envoys to Cordova to the King Abderahman Anasir, desiring to enter into a compact of friendship and obligation to maintain peace on the frontier with that monarch: these proposals were received well by Abderahman, and he accepted the truce thus offered, believing it to be for the advantage of the subjects on either side. The king thereupon dispatched his Vizier Ahmed Ben Said with the envoys of Gallicia to

salute Radmir in his name; when Ahmed repaired to Medina Leionis, the capital of Gallicia, accordingly. There a truce was agreed on, which was to endure for the space of five years, and it was in fact well observed on both sides. The inhabitants of Leionis were Christians, as are those of Afranc, and belong to the sect of Melkita.

In the year 333 certain reparations and other works required for the docks and harbours of Medina Tortosa were completed, and the king commanded that ships should be constructed in all the ports of the Mediterranean.

On the frontier of Eastern Spain the Wali Abderahman Ben Muhamad made an irruption into the mountains, driving the host, still maintained by the sons of Omar Hafsun Ben Arius, from Lerida and its Comarcas. He then appointed to the government of Lerida the Wali Muhamad Ben Attanail, who retained the same until the year 335. In this year the two brothers, Mondhir Ben Said El Boluti the Cadi, and Fadlallah Ben Said, returned to Cordova from the East; but the latter died a few days after his arrival in the capital. He was Valilcoda of Fohs Albolut.

At Ecija there was this year constructed by order of King Abderahman a magnificent aqueduct, with a spacious and very handsome watering-place for cattle. The completion of these works took place in the year of the Hegira 338, when the governor of the city and its Comarcas placed an elegant inscription thereon, which is as follows:—

"In the name of God, the Clement, the Merciful!

"The Prince of the Faithful, whom God exalt, even Abderahman the son of Mohamad, hath commanded that this aqueduct shall be constructed, hoping for the recompense of favour from the Almighty and Glorious God, the Giver of all Good. And this work has been finished by the aid of God, through the hands of His servant Amil 'Omeya Ben Muhamad Ben Somreid, in the moon of Muharram and the year 338.

CHAP. LXXIII.—Of the conspiracy of Abdallah, son of king Abderahman Anasir Ledinallah.

Now the King Abderahman had declared his son Alhakem his future successor in the empire, and the oath of allegiance to that Prince had been taken with great solemnity in the presence of the Walies, Viziers, Alcatibes, and Councillors of State.

The brother of Alhakem, Prince Abdallah, had given evidence of equal love for letters, and emulated the proficiency of the first-named prince in all the knowledge proper to his condition, as well as in manly exercises, horsemanship, and the use of arms. He had also rendered himself equally the object of love to those by whom he had been surrounded, and had won the affection of all men by his affability and liberal generosity. Both these princes were in fact distinguished by excellent qualities; both had remarkable ability, and each had acquired much erudition.

But Abdallah, inflated perhaps by the popular adulation, and misled by the counsels of designing men, who sought to secure their own elevation by his means,—Abdallah, I say, permitted himself to conceive ideas by which his happy and honourable condition was suddenly changed in a manner the most deplorable, and his previously blameless and peaceful life became troubled, by deceptive and forbidden hopes of a forced accession to that throne, which he knew to be destined to his brother, by the father of both. The dangers and fears surrounding the momentous attempt soon compelled him to concealments and subterfuges, seeing that the fate of the conspirator hangs for ever upon a breath, and his days are consumed in the invention of new projects.

The event, according to Abu Omar Ben Afif, who relates it in that history of his which was completed by Aben Hayan, took place after the following manner.

The most intimate friend and special favourite of Prince Abdallah was a man of extraordinary ability, said by some writers to have been an Alfaqui, named Ahmed Ben Muhamad, but known also as Aben Abdilbar, who was so constantly about the person of the prince that he might be said never to quit his side. He remained perpetually in attend-

ance, whether in the house or the field, and rarely was Abdallah to be seen without Abdilbar. But this man was a bold and ambitious dissembler: flattering to those above him, he was insolent and oppressive to all beneath, and under a modest exterior and semblance of much respect, he concealed an artful craftiness and pertinacious determination to carry out the plans he had conceived; thus ensuring that elevation of himself which was in truth the result he expected from their success, and the sole end of his labours.

This Ahmed Ben Muhamad found means to persuade Prince Abdallah, that the principal men, not of the capital only but of all the provinces, considered him aggrieved by the preference which his father had accorded to the Prince Alhakem, in declaring him his future successor. Insisting much on the qualities by which Abdallah was distinguished, and on the love displayed for him by the people, the dangerous flatterer to whom that unhappy young man gave his ear endeavoured to convince him that if he desired and would take the proper steps to ensure his proclamation by the populace, there would be no difficulty in accomplishing that object, and thus applying the proper remedy for the gross injustice which he had been made to suffer: nay, Ahmed Ben Muhamad even went further, and intimated to Abdallah that the king his father might be compelled to yield him the throne without delay, affirming that the most energetic measures which could be taken for the ensurance of such a result would not be without a full justification.

Dazzled by the prospect held out to him, and bewildered by the flatteries of this man, whose promise that all should be conducted with the utmost security to his person was frequently reiterated, and who described the facilities which he had already prepared as certain to ensure success, the ill-advised prince, conducted by the fatal influence of his evil star rather than by the malignity of his heart, permitted his dangerous follower to assemble a faction in his name, and consented for his own part to attempt the gaining over certain viziers and generals of his father's guard. He honoured the friends of Abdilbar with his especial protection, conferring on them such offices as were in his gift, and extending to them his utmost favour, familiarising him-

self meanwhile with every class of persons, as his insidious adviser counselled him to do.

None could be surprised that the Prince Abdallah should pay visits to the learned men whose fame and erudition had recommended them to his notice, or that such persons should frequent the palace of Meruan, in which the young prince resided, seeing that the love of Abdallah for literary pursuits had been always well known: but whether, it were that Aben Abdilbar did not confine the admissions to the palace which he requested Abdallah to grant, nor restrict the persons whom he induced the prince to visit, to men capable of sustaining such a character, or whether it be that good counsel is ever wanting to him whom Fortune has deserted, thus much is certain, that some one more loyal than Ahmed Ben Muhamad revealed the whole affair to the King Abderahman Ledinallah.

It was even affirmed that not only were designs entertained in favour of the future accession of Abdallah, but also that the sovereignty of Abderahman was in immediate peril; while the life of the Prince Alhakem was also threatened, nothing less than his assassination being considered by the conspirators to suffice for the ensurance of their safety The day for the commission of the crime was furthermore averred to have been fixed, and to be that of the Feast of the Victims, then fast approaching.

Abderahman, still in uncertainty as to the truth of this intelligence, but considering that if all we hear is neither to be believed nor feared, yet that in matters of so much importance no circumstance, however light in appearance, ought to be wholly disregarded, called his uncle the Prince Almudafar to his counsels, and in much secrecy made known to that faithful friend and loyal servant the relation that had been made to him.

It was then agreed between them that the king should send one of the Viziers of his guard to the palace of Prince Abdallah in the middle of the night, with orders to take him prisoner; using all care and secrecy, and conducting the Prince under a strong escort toMedina Azahra, where the Court then was. The proper arrangements being made accordingly, the Vizier departed for the capital, and entering the Alcazar

of Meruan, which was a little out of the city, in the name of the king, he there surprised Prince Abdallah, who was at that moment in company with the Alfaqui Aben Abdilbar, and with a cavalier called Ahmed Ben Abdallah Ben Alatar, who was his friend, and was likewise known as the Lord of the Rose. Both these persons the Vizier seized as being suspected, and took them separately to Medina Zahra, where they were imprisoned without being permitted to hold further communication with each other.

When Abdallah was brought into the presence of the king his father, the latter said to him: "It appears, then, that thou considered thyself wronged because thou dost not occupy my throne?" Whereat the prince was so much troubled that he uttered no word, and could only weep. His father then commanded, with much severity of tone and manner, that he should be shut up in his apartments; which was done.

Two Viziers of the Council of State were then commanded by Abderahman to ascertain with exactitude all that Prince Abdallah knew of the conspiracy; and this they did, learning every thing from himself with perfect clearness, seeing that the Prince did not hesitate to confess, with the ingenuous truth of his character, whatever had occurred up to the moment of his being placed under arrest.

It then became obvious that the suggestions of Aben Abdilbar had induced and incited the Prince to conspire against his brother; that it was Abdilbar, not Abdallah, who had facilitated the progress of the plot and prepared all the means towards that atrocious intent, since Abdallah was not acquainted with any other of the persons who were to take part in the crime. It was furthermore manifest that the Lord of the Rose, Aben Alatar, a man known to be very incautious and incapable of secrecy, was perfectly innocent in the matter, and, so far as Abdallah was aware, did not even suspect the existence of a plot.

At a word, it was evident that the prince could give no information beyond the evil counsels of Aben Abdilbar and the plot conceived by him, but knew nothing of any other conspirator, if such there were: finally, it appeared that the commencement of the affair had been no other than

this:—Abdilbar had desired to obtain the charge of Cadi of the Cadies of Spain; but, notwithstanding the favour of Prince Abdallah, he had not succeeded in accomplishing his wish: his discontent at this failure had led him to the ruinous determination now about to end in his own destruction, but Abdilbar finally affirmed that he was thankful to God for having in His Divine goodness been pleased to render all his machinations vain. Of his guilt there could meanwhile be no doubt, and being clearly convicted, the sentence of the king was that he should be decapitated on that day which he had proposed to make the witness of his crimes, the Easter of the Victims* namely.

When Abdilbar was made acquainted with the fact that he was to depart from life on the day of the Victims, he determined rather to die by his own hand; and on the night preceding that destined by Abderahman Anasir to be his last he destroyed himself in prison, when, being found dead as the day broke, his remains were given up to his kindred, by whom they were buried in the cemetery of the suburb. This was in the moon Dylhagia of the year 338. Fame, according to her custom, related atrocious circumstances as concerning these events, adding much to the plain truth; and even while the memory of this misfortune in the family of Abderahman was still fresh, the facts as connected with the death of Prince Abdallah, which followed instantly after, were described with various differences.

The authorities agree in affirming that Alhakem entreated the pardon of his brother, and that Abderahman Anasir replied, "These prayers and this intercession are good and becoming on thy part; and if I now held the position of a private person, it should be as thou hast desired and as my own heart would dictate: but as a king I must turn mine eyes to the future, and must give to my people an example of justice. Thus, while I shall bitterly mourn for my son,

* The Moslemah of Spain had four Easters in the year. The first was on the ninth day of the moon of Muharram, and was called the Easter of Ataucia; the second was on the twelfth of Rebie Primera, and was called that of Annabi; the third was on the first of Xawal, and was called that of Alfitra, or the departure of Ramazan; and the fourth was the tenth of Dylhagia, which was called the Easter of the Victims.—*Condé.*

and cannot cease to mourn for him until I shall cease to live, yet am I compelled to do as justice commands. I must imitate the example of the great Caliph Omar Ben Alchitab.* Thus, neither thy tears, nor my own despair, nor the sorrow of all our house, can deliver my unhappy son from the inevitable penalty of the crime which it is certain he hath committed."

We are also told that Prince Abdallah wrote to his father, entreating him for the Lord of the Rose, and saying to him, "My Lord, let not an innocent man be made to suffer for my fault." That same night the unfortunate prince was put death in his prison,† and the day following he was buried in the cemetery of the Rusafa: his funeral ceremonies were attended by his brothers, Alhakem, Abdelaziz Abulasbaz, Abdelmelic Abu Muhamad, Almondhir, and others of the house of Meruan, with all the nobles of the city.‡ And as misfortunes never come alone, a short time only had elapsed after this grievous event, before the uncle of the king, Abderahman Anasir, even the Prince Almudafar Ben Abdallah, departed from life, to the great regret of Abderahman, who loved him as a father.

CHAP. LXXXIV.—Of the arrival of messengers from Greece, and of other events.

At this time there came envoys to Cordova from the King of the Greeks to King Abderahman Anasir. They were received with much pomp and magnificence in the splendid

* The king here alluded to the tradition respecting Abu Xamha, whose father, the Caliph Omar, caused him to be scourged with frightful severity.—*Condé.*

† According to Alcodai Ben Alabar, the death of Abdallah took place on the second or third day after the Easter of Victims in the year 339; but Edobi and other ancient writers say that it took place at the same period in the previous year.—*Idem.*

‡ This great misfortune in the family of Abderahman is related by Edobi in very few words: these are to the effect that "Abdallah, a virtuous and erudite youth, was put to death by order of his father, because of the great number of his followers and the love borne to him for his excellent qualities: as if it were an affront to kings to have their sons beloved for their good dispositions."—*Idem.*

pavilion of the Great Garden, which had been hung for the occasion with rich textures of green silk and gold: Abderahman being attended by his Hagib, Viziers, and Alcatibes, while all were surrounded by a brilliant guard of Sclavonians.

The letters sent by the King of the Greeks were written on vellum adorned with gold and azure: they were enclosed in a casket of gold, and at their extremities were engraved the effigy of Jesus—Let His name be blessed,—and that of the Emperor Constantine. In these letters the Greek monarch requested Abderahman to renew those treaties of alliance which had been formed by their forefathers against the Caliphs of Bagdad.

Abderahman Anasir commanded his Hagib to entertain the Envoys magnificently, and after they had reposed for some days in Cordova they were dismissed with much honour; the king sending with them a Vizier of his household to salute the sovereign of the Greeks on his part, to assure that monarch of his friendship, and to present him with rich gifts, consisting of Andalusian horses, with splendid caparisons for the same, and of valuable arms prepared in Toledo and Cordova.

In Almagreb, or the West of Africa, the Wali Abu Alaixi Ahmed Alfadil, a son of Alcasim Edris, following the counsels of the Xenetes and Andalusian generals, then placed himself under the protection of Abderahman Anasic, whom he caused to be proclaimed in all his cities. This proof of confidence on the part of Abu Alaixi gratified King Abderahman exceedingly, and he wrote letters to that prince assuring him of his friendship, adding that he would protect him from all his enemies and aid him with all his power. He consequently dispatched troops from Andalusia to strengthen the garrisons of Cebta and Tangiers.

King Abderahman Anasir Ledinallah, of Cordova, was likewise proclaimed in Medina Tahart and the city of Fez, where there then governed, also under his protection, the Wali Muhamad Ben El Chair Yaferini, El Zenete, whose forefathers had been zealous partizans of the Omeyas of Spain.

Among the men of distinguished ability who flourished at this time in the Spanish capital, and who merited the

estimation of King Abderahman, were two belonging to the Amilia or Government of Segovia, one of whom was called Edris Ben Yemen, also known as El Sabini from the name of his native place: this was Cariat Sabin, which is so called on account of the Sabinas. These are a species of Sabin, or juniper-tree, which grows in great abundance amidst those hills, and of which a very good kind of small and light targe or shield is made. The merit of Edris Ben Yemen's poems was considered to be so great that none but Aben Derez could successfully compete with him.

The second of these distinguished persons was Abderahman Ben Othman El Oxami, so called from his birth in the ancient Oxama, and who was much renowned in that province for his learning and genius.

The king of Gallicia now appeared once more in Lusitania, and made further inroads on the territory of Zamora; and the Wali of Merida, with the generals commanding on the frontier, having sent advices of those events to Cordova, Abderahman Anasir caused the Algihed or Sacred War to be proclaimed, himself preparing to enter Gallicia, and assembling the banners of all the provinces for that purpose.

On this occasion the Governor of Fez, Muhamad Ben El Chair, Ben Muhamad El Yaferini, the Zenete Chief, came from Africa with a select body of cavalry to join the forces of Abderahman, and take part in the merits of the Sacred War. By permission of the king he remitted the charge of his government to his cousin, Ahmed Ben Abi Becri Ben Ahmed Ben Othman Ben Said, El Zenete, and had no sooner arrived in Cordova than he departed again for the Holy War. From Saragossa likewise there came Muhamad Ben Haxem El Tegibi; but this he was obliged to do by the terms of the compact which he had made with King Abderahman Anasir Ledinallah at the time when that monarch took possession of the city and its Comarcas.

The Wali Ahmed Ben Said Aben Amer commenced the war by entering the country of the Christians at Setmanica with a powerful body of troops, and by driving their forces from that place, which he then occupied, together with several other fortresses of the Comarca. That done, Ahmed Ben Said pressed forward with his light cavalry, even to the mountains, where he also encountered

the Christians and defeated them, taking a large spoil of flocks and herds, with many captives and much wealth of various kinds. This onslaught, which was largely celebrated at the time, took place in the year 339;* and in the following year the troops on the frontier, renewing their incursions, were again tolerably successful.

In that year there died at Cordova the Meruani Dwila Ben Hafas, a man of much power and influence, who contributed by his vast riches to the restitution which was this year made to Mecca of its black stone. He now departed to receive the great eternal recompense of his generous liberality.

In the beginning of the year 340, and at the same city of Cordova, there likewise departed from life Casim Ben Asbag of Baena, rendered illustrious by his wisdom. The works of Casim Asbag were the admiration of all men, whether from the East or West; and they were the study of all the Academies, both of Africa and the East. Many ages must pass before we can hope to find another sage who shall write so much and so well. Of Casim Asbag it is related that during the last two years of his life he never uttered one word.

In the year 339 there fell a hail-storm, with stones of which some exceeded a pound in weight. Birds, animals, and even men, were killed thereby; the fruits of the field were destroyed, as were the fruit-bearing trees, insomuch that in some provinces a great scarcity and dearness was the result of that violent storm.

When the Wali Ahmed Ben Said Abu Amer returned from his expedition to Gallicia, he was received in Cordova with acclamations of triumph, and the King Abderahman conferred on him many great honours. To his brother Abdelmelic was given the appointment of Vizier to the Council of State, when these Walies not only paid to the king's treasuries the tenth, which is the customary offering, but added thereto a very magnificent present, which they offered to Abderahman Anasir himself: thus giving evidence of their generosity as well as their opulence.

This gift, according to the account which we find in Abu

* A.D. 950.

Chalican, consisted of the following articles: four hundred pounds of pure gold, the value of four hundred and twenty thousand sequins in bars or ingots of silver; four hundred pounds of aloes, five hundred ounces of amber, three hundred ounces of precious camphor, thirty pieces of stuff woven from silk and gold, one hundred and ten fine skins of the marten from Corasan or Khorasan, forty-eight caparisons for horses, woven in Bagdad, and also of silk and gold; four thousand pounds of silk in skeins, thirty Persian carpets, eight hundred suits of armour for horses used in battle, all richly burnished; one thousand shields, one hundred thousand arrows, fifteen Arabian horses of pure race, with magnificent housings embroidered in gold; one hundred horses, partly of Spanish, partly of Arabian origin, and all richly caparisoned; twenty animals of burthen, with saddles for women, furnished with their canopies and covering wholly concealing the rider; forty male slaves, young and vigorous; with twenty female slaves, all splendidly attired: the whole accompanied by a poetical composition of considerable length in praise of King Abderahman, and which was the work of the Wali Ahmed Ben Said.

In the year 341 there died in Africa the lord of that country, Mansur Billah the Fatemite, who was succeeded by his son Moez Ledinallah Abu Temim Maad: Mansur Billah was thirty-nine years old at the time of his death; he had reigned seven years and seventeen days.

In the year 342 there fell a frightful hail-storm: nay, such as had never before been seen by man. The wild beasts were killed by the stones thereof, as were the flocks of the cultivator; while all the products of the earth were cut to pieces and destroyed. This was followed by a flood, in which large numbers of men were drowned. Rivers and mountain torrents carried away the dwellings of those who lived near their banks; and this happened in Africa no less than in Spain. During many days did fearful clouds and darkness continue to cover the earth, and these were accompanied by thunders, lightnings, and fierce hurricanes, which cast down great edifices, and rooted up trees of enormous growth.

In the moon Safir of the year 343, the Wali of Toledo, Obeidala Ben Ahmed Ben Yali, who had distinguished himself in Lusitania, to the north of Badajos, and in the Co-

marcas of that city, made an irruption into Gallicia and defeated the Christians, by whom he was called for his valour the Caid Alaina. He brought from those countries much spoil and many riches, proving himself clearly to be the son of Ahmed Ben Yali.

About this time the Wali of Fez wrote to King Abderahman Anasir Ledinallah communicating the progress made by his arms in the West of Africa, and requesting permission to construct a dome or cupola to the Aljama of that quarter called the Cairvanese, which Abderahman accorded, sending him a large amount of money in gold doubloons for the promotion of that work, with the fifth part of all the booty taken in Gallicia. Thus the Aljama was enlarged and enriched: the people of Fez took down the old dome, and on the summit of the new one they fixed the sword of Edris, the founder of their city. The work was completed in the year 344.

In the same year, the troops of Abderahman Anasir, King of Spain, took possession of the city of Telencen, and he was proclaimed there as Protector of the Sons of Edris. At the beginning of that year 344, there had been a grievous pestilence in Africa, Spain, and Almagreb, which had caused a fearful mortality in those regions.

CHAP. LXXXV.—Of the capture of an Egyptian argosy by an arraez, or captain of andalusia, and of other events.

At this time a large vessel which the King Abderahman had caused to be constructed in Seville, encountered on the coast of Sicily an African bark, which the Soldan of Egypt, Moez Daula, had dispatched with letters to the Wali whom he had appointed to govern that island. The Andalusian Arraez, or captain, commenced a battle with the ship of the Egyptian sovereign, and having taken her, continued his voyage to Alexandria, where he sold the articles of his merchandise, and having taken in others, departed on his return to Spain.

But when the Soldan of Egypt received notice of the capture of his ship, he commanded that armed vessels should

be sent out from his ports, as well as from those of Sicily, some of which could scarcely fail of meeting the bark of Andalusia. The ships of the Soldan were commanded by Alhassan Ben Aly, Wali of Sicily; and entering the port of Almeria with his armed vessels, Alhassan took the large Andalusian ship, which could not even save any part of the cargo; he also burnt some other and smaller vessels, which having done, and content with his revenge, he departed and returned to his island.

The news of this accident displeased King Abderahman Anasir very greatly, and the rather, as in the captured Andalusian vessel there were many beautiful damsels, and some who were accomplished singers, from Greece and Asia. Then the Hagib, Ahmed Ben Said, assured the king that he should be fully avenged; and collecting ships from all the coast of Spain, he passed over to Wahran with a large body of fighting men. There he assembled the Andalusian troops then in Almagreb, and finding himself at the head of twenty thousand horse he entered the province of Africa to fulfil the promise he had made of avenging his master. Nor was Alhassan Ben Aly slow to come forth against him, and a sanguinary combat ensued, but the Andalusians were conquerors: they made a fearful carnage among the people of Sanhaga and Ketama, pursuing the Africans who fled, and cutting up the pastures, while they also burnt the villages of those tribes even to the vicinity of Medina Tunis, which was nevertheless at the distance of two long days' march from the field of battle.

Now in Medina Tunis there lived many rich Jews and other traders, who were attracted to that town by its commodious position on the sea-coast, which they found convenient for their traffic: being made acquainted with this circumstance, the Andalusians were animated with the prospect of the booty to be obtained in the sack of the town, and delivered many obstinate combats in the hope of taking it. These fights took place both by sea and land, seeing that the Wali Ahmed Ben Said had commanded that his ships should pursue the line of the coast, and thus follow his movements on the land.

The inhabitants of the city, perceiving the danger they were in of having their town taken by the enemy, and having no

hope of receiving succours, demanded conditions of surrender, offering a large sum in gold doubloons as the redemption of their riches. Ahmed Ben Said thereupon exacted from them an immense amount of money, with a vast quantity of rich stuffs, inestimable jewels, precious vestments, and valuable merchandise of every sort; a certain number of slaves, male and female, were added, with costly arms, horses of pure race, and all the ships which they had in their port. In these vessels and in his own the Wali then sent that incalculable amount of riches to Spain, and returned to Seville very well avenged.

The spoil obtained in this expedition was so enormous that after having set apart the fifth belonging to the king, with the reimbursement due to him for the loss of his ships captured by the Wali of the Soldan, there remained a vast booty for the Hagib, the sea-captains, the commanders of the land force, nay, even for the soldiers themselves; insomuch that all were contented, whether Xenetes or Andalusians. The king received his Hagib, Ahmed Ben Said, with great honour, and assigned him for his maintenance the annual sum of one hundred thousand doubloons of gold.

Ben Alathir, a very careful observer and diligent narrator of extraordinary events, informs us that in this year, 346, the sea sunk down to the depth of eighty brazos or fathoms, so that islands, rocks, and eminences were then made perceptible which had never before been seen by man.

The same year beheld the completion of many fine embellishments which were added to the Court of the Aljama in Cordova; as, for example, commodious fountains, and other ornaments of a grand and magnificent character. A beautiful inscription, engraved on dark-coloured marble, was then placed on the principal fountain: it occupied thirteen lines, and was as follows:—

"In the name of God, the Clement and Merciful!

"Abdallah* Abderahman, Prince of the Faithful, Protector of the Law, whose state may God prolong, hath commanded to construct this fountain, and hath provided for the consecration thereof, and in order to the exaltation of this place,

* Abdallah, the Slave of Allah; here adopted as an expression of humility: but also used at other times by Abderahman as a mark of respect to his grandfather, the king of that name.—Tr.

which is dedicated to God, out of his reverence for the house of the Lord, and for the honour of the daily invocations* and prayers here presented before His throne: to the end, moreover, that the name of Allah should be exalted and glorified; hoping to receive for the same, great rewards and copious recompenses, with permanent glory, prosperity, and good fame.

"The work was finished, by the help of God, in the moon Dylhagia of the year 346; and by the hands of his servant the Vizier and Hagib of his palace, Abdallah Ben Batu, aided by those of the architect, Said Ben Ayub."

The Court in question is sufficiently spacious: it is planted with palm and orange trees, amidst which are gracefully constructed fountains of pure water, a certain quantity of which is permitted to flow among the flowers, thereby maintaining the bright verdure which flourishes beneath the trees; insomuch that the whole scene reminds the fortunate beholder of those delights which are described as blessing Paradise.

The Geographer Alwardi, comparing the Aljama of Jerusalem to that of Cordova, speaks thus:—

"To the east of the city stands the great mosque called Alaksâ, which hath not its equal in the world, unless it be the Aljama of Cordova in Andalusia. The length of the mosque of Alaksa is two hundred yards, and its breadth is one hundred and eighty. In the centre is the Alcoba Asahara, or Chapel of the Rock. Men say that the roof of the Aljama in Cordova is more lofty than that of the Alaksa in Jerusalem; but that the Court of the Alaksa in Jerusalem is more spacious than the Court of the Aljama in Cordova."

* In the inscription here given, the original Arabic has "the Idhan of Allah," which properly signifies that call to prayer made from the towers of the mosques, to the end that the people should assemble at the proper hours: but as this call consists of certain "invocations" of the name of God, so I (the Spanish author) have translated it thus. Our ancient Moriscoes of Spain called it the Aliden, and translated it by the word "prayer" or "invocation."—*Condé.*

CHAP. LXXXVI.—Of the arrival of abu alayxi in spain, and of other events.

In the year 347, Abderahman Anasir gave the government of Tangier and its Comarcas to Jaali Ben Muhamad El Yaferini; when Abu Alayxi Ahmed, Ben Alcasim Kenuz Ben Edris, perceiving the power of the king, and finding that he had now become lord and master of all Almagreb, wrote him letters requesting permission to visit Spain, there to make his Algihed or Sacred War: and the King Abderahman did not refuse to comply with the desire thus expressed.

When Abderahman received notice that Abu Alayxi was on the point of arriving in Spain, he sent orders to the effect that every Posada or Caravanserai erected for travellers, even from Algezira-Alhadra on the coast, to the city of Cordova itself, should be prepared and adorned with so much splendour and magnificence, that better could not be found, even in his own palaces; nay, in addition to the sums required for those works and for the maintenance of the Posadas in that state, Abderahman assigned a further amount of one thousand gold doubloons daily, for extraordinary presents to be made at each. And so it was done at all these mansions, of which there were not less than thirty.

In Cordova, Abu Alayxi was received with much honour; Prince Alhakem and his brothers going forth from the city to meet him, with a glittering company of cavaliers and a magnificent guard of honour. He was lodged and entertained in the royal palace, and after having enjoyed the delights of Cordova for some days, with some few more in Medina Azahra, he departed for the Eastern frontier, there to make his Algihed.

And thus combating for the Faith, it pleased God that he should receive the crown reserved for the warrior whose sword is raised for the law. Abu Alayxi was the last of the Sons of Edris who bore rule in Almagreb; he had left his brother, Alhasan Ben Kenuz, to act as Wali of the state in his absence, and Alhasan now continued to retain that office under the protection of the king of Spain.

About this time Maad Ben Ismail, desiring to take vengeance for the injuries done him by the Andalusians and Xenetes in his territories, and envious of the power obtained by the Omeyas in Almagreb, dispatched his General, Gehwar El Rumi, with twenty thousand horse from the Cabilas of Ketama and Zanhaga, accompanied by a much larger force from other tribes, with command to occupy the States of Almagreb.

Gehwar departed for Cairvan accordingly, with an immense multitude of troops, and the news of his invasion did not fail presently to reach the ears of Jaali Ben Muhamad El Yaferini, Wali of Almagreb for King Abderahman Anasir of Cordova. The latter assembled his Cabilas without loss of time; those of the Xenetes and of Masamuda being united to a large body of Andalusian cavalry: all which being prepared, he set forth to encounter the enemy. The advanced parties of the two hosts met in the vicinity of Medina Tahart, and for some time they fought with varying fortunes, both armies desiring to avoid a pitched battle.

Now Gehwar El Rumi had offered great rewards to the cavaliers of Ketama if they would take the life of the Wali of Almagreb; and a sanguinary skirmish having been commenced, which, without any such purpose, became a battle of more than thirty thousand horse, a band of cavalry burst forth in the hottest of the struggle, and directing their course to the spot where Jaali El Yaferini was then fighting like a lion in the very thickest of the combat, they all fell upon him at once, and piercing him with their lances, he fell dead in the midst of them. These assassins, and not warriors, then cut off the head of their victim, and this being held aloft in the sight of his people, the death of their Wali caused the Xenetes to fall into disorder, when they were defeated with a fearful carnage by the men of Ketama and Zanhaga.

The remains of Jaali El Yaferini being then taken to Gehwar, he paid the murderers of that chief the price agreed on. The head was instantly despatched to Maad Ben Ismail, who caused it to be raised upon a lance and paraded through all the streets of Cairvan. The son of the slaughtered Jaali had meanwhile gathered the scattered bands of the conquered

army, and with these he had retired for that time, sending his troops to different fortresses.

After that victory Gehwar turned his arms against Sigilmesa, where a certain Alcalde, named Muhamad Ben Feth, had obtained possession of the government. This Muhamad is known as Wesuc, Ben Maymon Ben Medara Ataferi; he sometimes called himself Amir Amumenin, and sometimes Xakirala, coining money in his Xeca or mint, which was called the Xaqueria. Although a vain and weak person, Muhamad Ben Feth was a just man, and very brave: he was of the sect of Melic. Against him now proceeded Gehwar El Rumi; and after besieging him in his city, beneath the walls of which were delivered many obstinate combats, Gehwar finally took the place by storm. Then, having put the whole garrison to the sword, he laid Muhamad in chains; and the unfortunate man was dragged forward in the train of his conqueror.

In the commencement of the year 349 the triumphant army of Gehwar entered the territory of Fez and laid siege to the city, which the troops attacked day and night at all points, without giving the defenders a moment of repose. After the lapse of thirteen days passed thus, the troops of Gehwar took the place by storm; the Andalusians and Xenetes continuing the defence thereof even to the death. The Governor of Fez, Ahmed Ben Becri El Zenete, who held the city and province for Abderahman King of Spain, was laid in bonds by Gehwar El Rumi, who permitted his troops to sack and pillage the houses, while he commanded them to destroy the walls of the town with the towers that defended the gates.

This entrance of the enemy into Fez was effected on the twentieth day of Ramazan; and in a few months the same general made himself master of all the cities of Almagreb, the garrison towns of Cebta, Tangiers, and Telencen alone excepted, which were defended by the troops of Abderahman.

Gehwar then returned to Mahedia, bearing in triumph the Lord of Sigilmesa, the Wali of Fez, and fifteen cavaliers belonging to the principal families of that city. The entry of these prisoners he cruelly caused to be made on the bare backs of camels. They were heavily chained, and on their heads were placed tattered rags of woollen stuffs

instead of turbans, from the centre of which horns were made to ascend. In that deplorable guise the barbarian led his captives through all the streets and public squares of the city, thus giving them as a prey to the scorn of the base and vulgar. He then threw them into the prisons of Mahedia, and in those dungeons they miserably perished.

These painful events did not fail to fill the heart of Abderahman Anasir Ledinallah with new grief, increasing the sorrow with which he still mourned the death of his son Abdallah, his uncle Almudafar, and his Hagib Selid, which had just then occurred.

Thus the melancholy that consumed him, increased by new misfortunes, was not to be concealed. Yet it did not render him inactive; to repair the evils committed in Africa, and take vengeance on his enemies, he gave orders for the preparation of a large fleet, in which it was his purpose to despatch a vast army to Fez, whereupon the most active measures were instantly taken; works of great magnitude being at once commenced in Seville, Algezira-Alhadra, and Almeria.

Nor did Abderahman Anasir neglect the defence of his frontiers on the East of Spain. It is true, that in the meanwhile, the Christians dwelling in the mountains had made several impetuous onslaughts, but these had been so sudden and unexpected that there was no time to prevent them. The avenging of those injuries was not difficult; and the Walies of Saragossa, Huesca, Afraga, and Tarragona, falling by order of the king on the lands of those infidels, the Christians of the mountains inflicted upon them an indescribable amount of damage.

In Andalusia, the transport of troops, both foot and horse, to Cebta and Tangiers was continued with unremitting diligence, and the generals of King Abderahman already in Almagreb, uniting their forces to those sent them by their sovereign from Spain, they were soon in command of a large force.

In a few months, therefore, after fighting with varied fortune in several encounters, the great valour they displayed and their prosperous fortune prevailed: the lost cities and fortresses were all recovered, and Medina Fez being taken by assault, the troops of Abderahman made a fearful carnage among those of Ketama and Zanhaga.

Finally they brought the whole country into subjection, and in all the Alminbares of Almagreb, the powerful King Abderahman Anasir of Cordova was proclaimed, amidst the universal rejoicings of the towns, and to the great triumph of the Zenete Cabilas, who were ever the zealous partizans of his house.

CHAP. LXXXVII.—Of various works performed by the king Abderahman Anasir Ledinallah, and of his death.

It was during this year of 349, that Abderahman Anasir caused to be constructed at Tarragona the Mihrab, or interior oratory of the principal mosque; over the grand arch of the façade the following inscription was engraved on the most precious marble that could be procured.

"In the name of God! May the blessing of Allah be on Abdallah Abderahman, Prince of the Faithful, whose life may God prolong; he it is who hath commanded that this work should be executed by the hands of his servant and freedman Giaffar, in the year 349."*

In like manner, and at the same period, did King Abderahman cause the Aljama of Medina Segovia to be restored, adorning it with the most beautiful columns. On the completion of this work also an elegant inscription was composed and placed on the pillars of the Mihrab. Abderahman likewise built mosques, baths, fountains, and hospitals in many other cities; constructing all these fabrics with the utmost beauty, and to the greatly increased convenience of the towns thus endowed.

At this time there was much admiration expressed in Cordova for the poems of Chalaf Ben Ayub Ben Ferag, and more especially for his eulogia on the king, which were read in those academies, or assemblies of the learned, held by Prince Alhakem at the Meruan palace, as well as in those which the Vizier, Obeidala Ben Yahye, Ben Edris was accustomed to gather at his house. One of the most distinguished among the learned men of the Capital, and a person

* A.D. 960.

much esteemed by Abderahman, was his Counsellor of State, Abu Becri Ismail Ben Bedr; who sent the king some elegant verses on the occasion of his celebrating one of his latest conquests. Seeing that his sovereign was very sad, absorbed in melancholy thoughts, unable to give his attention to the conversation passing in his presence, and taking no part in the enjoyment of his guests, Abu Becri composed the lines which follow:—

"The breath of Victory makes glad the breeze:
Let thy cares flee before it. List! the sound
Of jubilee from thy rejoicing guests
Fills the high hall. Our aromatic cups,
Forbidden by no law, make glad the heart!
Why then should sadness reign? nay, drive it hence,
And call the smile of gladness to thy lip,
As now it lights up mine."

The king received the lines, but his melancholy still continued; whereupon Ismail sent verses written in the same measure to one of the King's favourite slaves: these commenced thus:—

"Speak, Light of Life! wherefore do clouds surround him,
Our noble King? Nay, bid thy bright smile chase them,
Leaving the son of battle to suspire
For Love alone. Bid him resign his griefs
And wear for these, his festive halls, the aspect
That best beseems the hour."

Remarking the persistence of his often tried and deservedly trusted friend Ismail, the king replied by a copy of verses, also written in the manner chosen by his affectionate counsellor, and which began as follows:—

"How can he choose but sigh, whose life is wasted
In ceaseless tears? When shall the moment come
That brings for this grieved heart a brighter lot?
Are mine the cares that as the wine-cup circles
Betake themselves to flight? Alas, my friend!
It is not so. Past are my hours of joy,
The roses of my life have lost their bloom:
The lilies of my garden bend their heads
Before the storm that may not be confined
And knows no stay. Me waits the gloomy wing
Of rayless Night; and never Morning's beam
Shall chase again the shadows closing round me.

In these thoughts, thus expressed, the depth of the failing monarch's melancholy was sufficiently manifest: the flower of his days had passed, and he was not without fear lest his military fame and glory should also be approaching their decadence.

Abderahman was now in the habit of passing the greater part of the year at Medina Azahra, amidst the cool amenities of his beautiful gardens, resigning at those times all the cares of government to his son Prince Alhakem, the acknowledged successor to his throne, seeing that since the death of Sehid he would accept no other as Hagib. Here he frequently conversed with one of the most distinguished of his nobles, Suleiman Ben Abdelgafir El Firexi namely, who had at one time been a great and renowned warrior, but had now becom every austere, and a determined opponent of the world and its vanities, living a most retired, nay, ascetic life, and thinking only of his devotions. He went barefoot, wore nothing but sheep-skins, and living in continual contemplation of death, had the fear of God constantly before his eyes.

The reply given by Suleiman Ben Abdelgafir El Firexi to one who enquired after his health was remarkable.

"How should he be," he enquired, "who has this bad world for his house and Eblis* for his neighbour: the fiend, moreover, noting down his deeds, words, and thoughts?"†

So did Suleiman reply to the friendly question of him who had saluted him. He called himself Abu Ayub; much of his time was employed in the care of the poor and the consolation of the afflicted: King Abderahman often made him the channel of his bounties, and assisted many indigent families by his hands.

In a certain conversation which the King held with this good Mosleman, Abderahman said that when he summed up the number of the moments of pure and perfect tran-

* Eblis, Satan.

† The Moslemah who adopt an ascetic and contemplative life reckon four enemies to the soul—Eblis, the Dunia, the Nefs, and the Hewa: The Devil, the World, the Pleasures of the Table, and the Snares of Love. They say, "Four dexterous archers assail me with the arrows shot from their rapid bows: Eblis and the World, Gluttony and Love. From these, my foes, Thou alone Oh Lord, canst deliver me."—*Condé.*

quillity of mind accorded to him during the fifty years of his reign, he could scarcely make them amount to fourteen days of true happiness.

The King spent the last months of his life at Medina Azahra, surrounded by his most trusted friends and enjoying the solace of their converse. He also found an occasional distraction in listening to the elegant songs composed by his female slave Mozna, who was also his Secretary, and to the poems of Aixa, a damsel of Cordova, the daughter of Ahmed Ben Casim, who is said to have been the purest, most lovely, and most learned maiden of her day.

Safia, the daughter of Abdallah El Rayi, was also an accomplished writer of that period; and in her poems, which were graceful as learned, Abderahman likewise took much delight, as he did in the pleasing society and sparkling witticisms of his lovely slave Noiratedia.

With these attendants and companions Abderahman passed the shadowy hours of twilight in the orange groves and amidst the citron bowers of his gardens, rich in the date, vine, and every other fruit that most rejoices the palate.

In the very last of his days, though still somewhat melancholy, Abderahman was yet constantly affable and gracious towards all who surrounded him. At length, and by a slight indisposition, the irresistible hand of the Angel of Death translated him from his palaces of Medina Azahra to the eternal abodes of better life; and this happened on Wednesday, the second day of the moon Ramazan in the year 350. Abderahman was then in the seventy-second year of his age; he had reigned fifty years, six months, and three days; nor did any one of his family hold the reins of government for a longer period.

Praised be the Lord, whose Empire is eternal and ever-glorious!

CHAP. LXXXVIII.—Of the reign of the king Alhakem ben Abderahman, called Almostansir Billah.

On the day following his father's death, the third of Ramazan namely, Prince Alhakem was proclaimed king, being then in the forty-seventh year of his age, or, as others

say, he was forty-eight years, two months, and two days old: the long reign of his father had indeed exhausted the days of his flowery youth; and Abderahman himself was accustomed to say to him, "My time is prolonged and defrauds thee of thine, Oh Abulasi!"

The name of Alhakem's mother was Mergan. He was of the middle height, but was very well formed, though not of lofty stature; he had beautiful eyes, and was of a grave yet pleasing aspect.

His proclamation and the oath of allegiance were performed with great pomp: the brothers and cousins of the monarch stood first around his throne; then came the Captains of his guard—Sclavonians, Andalusians, and Africans. The Hagib and the Viziers stood in front, and the Sclavonian guard, ranged in a double file, were placed around the great hall, each man holding his naked sword in one hand and his large shield in the other. Negro slaves, clothed in vestments of snowy white, formed two other files, and these held each a battle-axe in his hand, which was supported on his shoulder. In the external court were the Andalusian and African guard, glittering in their magnificent habits and splendid arms, with files of white slaves, all holding their swords in their hands. The brothers of the king, his Viziers, and his Generals, all swore allegiance, without reserve or conditions, as was the custom; then he was proclaimed amidst the general rejoicing of all the people.

This ceremony having been solemnised at Medina Azahra on the day of Abderahman's death, Alhakem sent the corpse of his father to Cordova on the following day, with an accompaniment of extraordinary pomp, and the royal remains were laid in a magnificent sepulchre constructed in the pantheon of the Rusafa. The bier of Abderahman was followed by all the nobles of the city, and his memory was honoured by the tears of an innumerable multitude, who exclaimed:—

"Dead is our father, and broken is his sword,—the sword of Islam, the protector and refuge of the weak and needy, the terror and dismay of the proud."

The wise astrologers and poets announced for Alhakem a continuance of the prosperity which had signalised the reign of his father Abderahman Anasir Ledinallah; and this they did, not in Cordova only, but in all the cities of the

kingdom, thereby filling the hearts of all who dwelt in Spain with the brightest hopes. Among other learned persons, the Wali of Seville, Ismail Ben Badr Ben Ismail Ben Ziadi Abu Becri, a freedman by the grace of the Omeyas, composed some very elegant verses on the day of King Alhakem Almostansir's proclamation. They are preserved in that collection entitled "The Gardens," and made by Aben Ferag, who says of Ismail Ben Badr, that in the poetical contentions of that day, he surpassed all other men of genius then flourishing. Ismail Ben Badr was for some time the Rawi, Romancist, or Story Teller of King Alhakem Almostansir, and used to relate to him feats of arms and love-tales, with many wonderful circumstances to enhance their interest, his style also being singularly polished; but he had already become old when appointed to that office, and died some years later.

Alhakem Almostansir now commanded that his own name, with the august titles of Imam, and Ameer Amumenin, or Prince of the Faithful, should be placed on the coins of gold and silver, as his father Abderahman had done; but he also added the name of his Hagib beneath his own, that officer being Prefect of the Mint or Zecca.

Alhakem Ben Abderahman had been so earnest a lover of letters and of useful acquirements, even from his earliest youth, that he had no stronger passion; he was careful to acquire the most valuable works on the arts and sciences. A complete collection of books of poetry and eloquence, with every species of memorial and document in history and geography, was made by this prince: for this he spared no pains and grudged no cost. He caused treasures of that kind to be sought and secured for him in all parts of the world, and had messengers sent for that especial purpose into all the principal cities of Africa, Egypt, Syria, the Isaks, and Persia; these persons being expressly charged to obtain possession of all works possessing value.

With these his acquisitions Alhakem entirely filled the Meruan palace, insomuch that there was in that edifice no other thing than books; nor was there ever a Mosleman prince who added book to book with a more earnest mind than did King Alhakem Ben Abderahman, called Almostansir Billah.

This learned monarch possessed all the genealogies of the Alarabian tribes of Africa and Arabia, accompanied by minute accounts of thier earliest histories and different emigrations. His palace was ever open to men of learning and genius, and of these he selected the most wise and learned, whom he would then dispatch to distant parts in search of new and select acquisitions of the kind he so greatly valued.

Among other persons employed by Alhakem in this matter was Abu Ishac Muhamad Ben Alcasim El Xeibani in Egypt; with Abu Omar Muhamad Ben Jusuf Ben Jacub El Kendi in Syria, and he had others beside in other places. To Abulfaragi El Isfahani, El Coreixi, of the royal race of the Meruans, the King Alhakem wrote himself, requesting that learned writer to send him a copy of his book entitled El Agani, which was a very valuable collection of canticles: for the costs of this copy the king sent El Isfahani letters empowering him to draw on his treasuries for unlimited sums, adding one thousand crowns of gold as a commencement.

Abulfaragi sent him the copy accordingly, with a genealogical history of the Omeyan Princes, an exceedingly minute and circumstantial work, in which no fact that concerned their noble race was omitted. To this El Isfahani added an elegant copy of verses in praise of the princes of that family.

In Bagdad Alhakem had also an agent for affairs of similar character and for the purchase of valuable books, Muhamad Ben Tarhan namely. He also kept accomplished copyists in various cities, to the end that he might obtain manuscripts of the best writings. His library was arranged with particular care. Books on the various subjects and sciences were all placed in order and under their respective heads; the halls and compartments being marked with inscriptions describing the contents of each, and setting forth the particular science of which the books contained therein treated.

In the catalogues which he also caused to be prepared, the king not only had the names of the books and that of their authors inserted, but also each man's genealogy and native place, the year of his birth and that of his death, all which he took care that competent persons should ascertain with truth and accuracy.

Alhakem was in these things remarkably profound and learned; he had the genealogies of all the Arabian tribes settled in every separate region of Spain described in writings of much prolixity and exactitude, and in these his labours and investigations he was ably assisted by his secretary Galeb Ben Muhamad Ben Abdelwahib, known as Abu Abdelselem; it was by Galeb Ben Muhamad, according to Razi, that the Register or Gazetteer of every town in Spain was prepared.

In his "Universal History of Races," Abu Muhamad Ben Huzam declares that during the fifteen years of his reign this sovereign was the protector of letters and the learned, as well as the delight and love of his people; and Aben Hayan, speaking of the books he collected, tells us that the catalogues of his Bibliotheca Meruania—so called because it was established in the Meruan palace—extended to forty-four volumes, each containing fifty sheets: these being filled with the names of the books and the authors alone. According to Telid El Feti, the general index, or catalogue of Alhakem's collectors, was not completed until some time after his death, and in the reign of Hixem his son.

After his father had confided to him the cares of his government, Alhakem ceased to occupy the whole of his time with his books, giving to them only such hours as he could abstract from the demands made upon him by his duty to the State, and dividing the leisure thus obtained between them and the conversation of those learned men whose society was the second great solace of his life.

But however severe the obligations imposed on him by his duties as a ruler, Alhakem Ben Abderahman Anasir never neglected to promote the advancement and interests of the wise and good, whether as acting for his father or when himself seated on the throne. Ever ready was the accomplished Alhakem to favour men of genius; he sent invitations to the most distinguished Sages of Africa and the East, requesting them to establish themselves in Spain, and make that country their home. To his brother Abdelaziz, who had always displayed much love of letters in general and of poetry in particular, Alhakem confided the care of his library; while to his brother Almondhir he gave the especial charge of the learned men whom he had assembled around

him, as well as the direction of his academies. He passed much of his time at Medina Azahra, enjoying the tranquillity of those flowery abodes with more quietude than had been the lot of his father.

A beautiful slave, named Redhiya, distinguished for the graces and accomplishments of her mind even more than for the beauties of her person, was much beloved by Alhakem Almostansir, who called her his Star of Happiness.

Muhamad Ben Jusuf, of Guadalhajara, was admitted to the closest intimacy by this sovereign, and was one of his most trusted friends. He wrote for Alhakem the history of Spain and that of Africa, with the biographies of their kings, the description of their wars, and the history of certain among the principal cities of both countries,—as, for example, of Wahran, Tahart, Tunis, Sigilmesa, and Nocôr. Another person also greatly esteemed by King Alhakem was the renowned poet, Muhamad Ben Yahye, called El Calafata; he was one of the most accomplished men and elegant writers whom Andalusia had then produced.

It was on the invitation of Alhakem that the Persian Sabûr came to Cordova, a man who, notwithstanding that he had then attained but few years, was already learned to a marvel, and whom the king made his Chamberlain, to the intent that he might have him ever near his person.

CHAP. LXXXIX.—OF THE INCURSIONS MADE BY KING ALHAKEM BEN ABDERAHMAN, CALLED ALMOSTANSIR BILLAH, ON THE FRONTIER OF GALLICIA.

IN the first years of his reign this monarch was not disturbed by wars, some slight irruptions and skirmishings on the frontiers alone excepted; nor in these did the Moslemah fail to contend with a fair amount of good fortune, holding the Christians in respect, and confining them very much to their own lands and the fastnesses of their mountains. There were some excursions also made by the Moslemah on the lands of the infidels, but these were not of any great importance.

In the year 352* King Alhakem ordered that an expe-

* A.D. 963.

dition should be undertaken against the frontiers of the Douro; and by way of giving a greater impulse to the preparations required for the same, he repaired in person to the city of Toledo, where he was received with many demonstrations of gladness. Being then on the point of making an incursion upon the district of Santisteban,* Alhakem declared what were the duties of the Moslemah when setting forth to make the Algihed or Sacred War, or to maintain due order on their frontier.

"It is the duty of every good Mosleman," he said, "to undertake willingly the Algihed or Holy War against the Infidels, the enemies of our Law. The Christian is to be required to embrace Islam, except when, as now, the invasion has been commenced by the Moslemah; but in every other case the proposal to become a Believer is to be made, and if refused, the Infidel is then to pay such an amount of tribute as hath been settled and arranged for the Christians living under our lordship.

"If the Enemies of the Law be not twice as numerous as the Moslemah, then he who turns his back upon them in the battle hath proved himself to be a vile coward; he sinneth against the law and hath offended our honour. When taking possession of a city, let no man slay women, children, or old men past power of resistance; neither shall any man attack monks vowed to a life of solitude, save in the cases where these latter are making a defence injurious to the Moslemah cause. Do violence to none to whom you have once given promises of security, but be careful to keep all engagements and fulfil all contracts.

"The safe-conducts granted by the Generals shall be respected by all; none shall disturb or offend any who have obtained such.

"All the captives, flocks, and other spoil taken in battle, excepting that fifth which belongs to ourselves, shall be divided on the field or place of battle itself: soldiers of the Cavalry receiving two parts, those of the Infantry one. With respect to matters required for food, let each take what he may require.

"If a Moslemah perceive any article among the booty

* San Esteban, or St. Stephen.

which he knows to belong to himself, let him make oath to that effect before the Cadi of the Host, who shall cause it to be restored to him, if his claim be made before the partition of the booty; but if it be not preferred until after, then the Cadi shall assign to him the just value of the object. To each man serving in the host, even when not among the combatants, but in some other capacity, the Generals shall apportion a reward suited to his condition and services; and this shall be done even though he be of another faith. The same rule shall be observed with respect to any one who has performed a noble exploit during the battle, or some important service not appertaining to the combat.

"No man having father and mother, shall be permitted to join the host of the Algihed or proceed to the frontier, however high his merits, unless he shall have first obtained the consent of both; and to this the sole exception is that of a sudden emergency, wherein the first duty is obviously to hurry to the defence of the country, in which case obedience to the Wali who summons to arms is to pass before all other considerations.

"These orders I command the Generals to make public, and to have them read before every banner now assembling in Toledo from all the provinces."

While in Toledo the King Alhakem caused enquiry to be made for a young man belonging to one of the regiments of his guard, named Abdallah Ben Muhamad Ben Mogueith, who was the son of the Cadi Abdelwalid Junas Ben Abdila, known as Aben Alsafar. This youth had distinguished himself by his erudition, and was then occupied with the literary productions of the kings of the Beni Omeya, and with the poetry which had been written by men of genius in praise of those monarchs, all which he was collecting and illustrating with much ability.

This Abdallah Ben Muhamad was presented to the king accordingly, when he entreated permission to remain at Medina Toledo or proceed to Cordova, alleging his want of health as a reason wherefore he should be excused from accompanying the troops at that time proceeding to the war.

Alhakem then said to the Captain of his Guard, Ahmed Ben Nasar—

"Let Abdallah remain, in God's name: it would grieve

me if he were to fall sick, because I expect good service from him, and of a kind particularly agreeable to myself."

He then turned to Abdallah, and said, "I have good hope, Abdallah, that thy work will leave me no cause to envy the Caliphs of Beni Alabas their possession of that presented to them by the writers of their land. It will perhaps be better that thou shouldst return to Cordova, where thou canst not only obtain the cares required for thy health, but may also continue thy labours with the greater convenience, whether in thy own house, or, if thou prefer it, in the royal abode of the Almotilla on the edge of the river, which I place at thy disposal."

Abdallah returned thanks to the king, and said that he would continue the work in his own house, where he could command more quiet than in any other place. He resumed his labours accordingly, and persisted in them so earnestly that before the monarch's return from Gallicia, he was ready to present King Alhakem with the finished work.

The banners of the provinces having now assembled, King Alhakem Ben Abderahman departed for Gallicia with his Walics and Alcaides, making it obvious to his people that he was a brave and able commander of armies, as well as a wise and prudent sovereign.

The Moslemah directed their march on Santisteban, which they besieged; and although the Christians came to the aid of their brethren with an innumerable host, yet the force of Alhakem being also a powerful one, he attacked them with success. The combat was a fierce and obstinate one, many falling on both sides; but God gave his aid to the arms of Alhakem, who vanquished his foes, took the place by assault, and put the garrison to the sword; he then caused the fortifications to be razed to the ground. He also occupied Sedmanca, Cauca, Uxama, and Clunia; the works of these towns were likewise destroyed by his order.

These things accomplished, the king led his forces to Medina Zamora, laying siege to that city also, and delivering many combats under the walls thereof, with greatly varying results; but the Christians defending the place were ultimately overcome; the city was taken by storm, and there were few of the garrison who found means to deliver their lives from the sword of the Moslemah.

Alhakem remained for some time at Zamora with all his army, and here also he commanded that the walls should be destroyed. With many captives and much spoil the king then returned as a conqueror to Cordova, entering the capital amidst the acclamations of triumph, and calling himself Almostansir Billah, to intimate his confidence in the help and favour of God.

While Alhakem had been absent on this expedition, the tribe of Charazag arrived in Spain: the men of this Cabila were of a very ancient and noble race; they had previously had their abode at Medina, but now settled themselves in Cordova and the Comarcas immediately around that capital.

A few months after King Alhakem's return from the Algihed, there came Envoys to Cordova from the King of Gallicia and the Lords of Castille, requesting that King Alhakem would be pleased to make peace with them, and as of his natural disposition that monarch was most peacefully inclined, he rejoiced much at the receipt of their petitions. He treated the ambassadors with great distinction, detaining them for some time in Cordova, and entertaining them very honourably at Medina Azahrah, where Alhakem received them in his gardens.

Much delighted with their reception, the Gallician nobles could not sufficiently express their admiration of the city and the rich magnificence of the royal Alcazar. They departed to their own country in the highest degree content; and the king sent with them a Vizier of his council, who was the bearer of letters from himself to the King of Gallicia. To these was added a present of beautiful horses, richly caparisoned, falcons of the most noble, fierce, and generous race, with swords manufactured at Medina Toledo and at Cordova.

This treaty of peace was made in the year 354.*

CHAP. XC.—Of various events, and of regulations made by king Alhakem ben Abderahman, called Almostansir Billah.

At this time, many cavaliers from Eastern Spain, the mountains of Afranc, Gallicia, and Castile, came to Cordova:

* A.D. 965.

here they were all well received, and treated honourably, as was to be expected from the justice, excellence, and high nobility of King Alhakem. Many of these Christian Cavaliers would fain have had the king make war on other Christians; and not a few among the Viziers of his council, and the Walies of the frontier, desiring a rupture, because they knew that the Christians were at war among themselves, and considered the occasion a favourable one, would gladly have seen the king lend ear to their suggestions.

But Alhakem made answer in the words of the Book of God:

"'Be faithful in the keeping of your contracts, for God will require an account of such at your hands.'"

In the year 355, there was a fierce hurricane both in Spain and Africa, by the fury of which trees were rooted up, great edifices cast to the ground,, and not a few villages destroyed. Many people lost their lives, in both countries; but the injury done in the west of Africa was much more serious than that suffered in Spain. In that same year, and during the night of Tuesday the twenty-eighth day of the moon Regib, there appeared upon the sea a tall and lofty flame, or leaping light, of the circumference of a huge column; and this phenomenon so completely illumined the night with its splendour, that the darkness was overcome, and a light was shed abroad which approached the clearness of day.

During the same month there were eclipses of the sun and moon. The eclipse of the moon was on the night of the fourteenth, and that of the sun on the twenty-eighth day, commencing at the hour of sunrise.

Now by an evil habit and licentious custom, introduced into Spain by those of Irak, and other strangers, the use of wine had become habitual, and in a manner permitted; nay, the common people and even the Alfaquis drank it without reserve. In the Walimas,* and other feastings, it was drunk with a scandalous freedom; but King Alhakem, who was a sincerely religious prince, and profoundly learned in the most

* Our Moslemah call their wedding-feasts Walimas, and these they celebrate with great rejoicings, and the glad Zambra, which last is music and the dance, with love-songs,—the latter sung by women.—*Condé.*

approved expositions of the Koran, abstained entirely from that indulgence: he now assembled his Alimes and Alfaquies, enquiring from them what was the cause of that abuse then become general throughout Spain. For it had been made known to the king that not only the Sahhâ, or white wine, but the Ghamar, or red wine, and the Nebid, or date wine, with wines made of figs, and other fruits, were also drunk in abundance, all of these being strong drinks, capable of producing inebriation.

The Alimes and Alfaquies replied, that from the reign of the King Mahomed a belief had prevailed, which had now become the received opinion of all, namely, that the Moslemah of Spain, being as they were at perpetual war with the enemies of Islam, might lawfully use wine, seeing that this beverage increased their valour, and assisted to keep up the hearts of the soldiery in battle. They added, that it was thus permitted in all the frontier lands, having been found to contribute not a little to the persistence and bravery of the combatants.

The king reproved the holders of these opinions, which displeased him greatly; and in his anger he gave orders to the effect that all the vine-grounds in Spain should be rooted up, so many vine-gardens alone being retained as might suffice to supply the fruit of the grape for eating fresh in its season, for the dried fruits required at other times, for syrups or honey of the grape, and for other salutary and permitted confections of similar character, which it was the custom to make of the thickened must.

At this time, the Cadi Mayor, or chief Cadi of the Aljamas of Spain, was Abdelmelic Ben Mondhir Ben Said El Boluti, a man illustrious for his wisdom and love of justice; to him, therefore, the king entrusted this affair, as well as many others of the highest importance.

In the year 356, King Alhakem received a legacy of very precious books, with intelligence of the death of their author, Abulfaragi Ali Ben Alhasan Ben Muhamed Ben Alhaitam, of the family of Omeya, and who was a descendant of the last Caliph of that house, reigning in the East.

Abulfaragi was a native of Bagdad, where he had been born in the year 284. A man learned in all the sciences, he was more especially accomplished in that of government and the history of princes; he was also well skilled in

genealogy. This illustrious person composed a book of Canticles, a work on which he was occupied during fifty years. He presented it to the Soldan of Halepo,* who sent him one thousand crowns of gold for the same, with apologies for the meanness of the gift.†

Abulfaragi composed other books and works relating to Moslemah history, which were very valuable. Among these are the history of the Omeyan Caliphs,—those of the East as well as those residing in Spain. This last he had secretly sent to Alhakem, while he was yet prince, and had received many precious gifts, with a large sum in gold, for the same.

The book of the Kings of Spain, entitled "Origin of the Omeyas," was likewise written by this author, as were the "Emigrations and Conquests of the Arabs;" a "General Genealogy," and the "Acts and Adventures of Aben Xeiban."

In that same year, and during the moon of Rebie Postrera, there died at Cordova the wise Alfaqui Ismail Abu Aly, El Cali, Preceptor to the King Alhakem. He was born, in the year 288, at Cala, a village of Menar Gerd in Diarbeber, but lived for a long time at Bagdad, and was therefore known as El Bagdadi. He was much favoured while in that city by the Caliph Metuakil, who consulted Ismail Abu Aby if a fly did but pass across his head. This learned man came to Cordova at the request of King Abderahman Anasir Ledinallah, to be the master in erudition of the prince his son; and the latter, having loved and distinguished him all the remainder of his life, did honour to his memory after death, bestowing a magnificent sepulchre on his remains.

King Alhakem Ben Abderahman appointed the learned Aben Zarbi to be Cadi of the Aljama of Cordova. He gave the office of Cadi Viziers of the same to Aben Thalaba, to Ibrahim Ben Harun Ben Chalaf El Masamudi, a native of Barbary, who had been Cadi of Alisbona, and to Abu Becri Ben Huefid, all three men of learning, in high credit, and distinguished for their integrity and wisdom, even more than for their acquirements.

* Aleppo.

† According to Aben Sohna, this work, the Kiteb El Agâni, was the principal performance of Abulfaragi. It was accompanied by the music of each canticle, with directions for the execution thereof.—*Condé*.

CHAP. XCI.—Of new wars in Almagreb, or the west of Africa.

The peace now enjoyed in Spain was far from extending its influence to the other side of the Strait, and the land of Magreb. In those regions, Alhasan Ben Kenuz, Lord of Medina-Biserta, with aid from the generals and troops of Andalusia, had obtained possession of nearly all the provinces; and that Ameer continued in obedience to Alhakem, King of Spain; but he did so from fear of his great power, and the near neighbourhood of the forces he could bring against him, rather than from loyalty or good-will.

Now in the year 357, Balkin Ben Zeir Ben Menad of Zanhaga had appeared with a powerful army, determined to take vengeance on the Zeneta Walies for all they had made his people suffer at the storming of Fez. He came from the East of Africa; and his approach was so sudden and unexpected that it could not fail of success. Thus for three years this Balkin prospered in all his undertakings, defeating all the troops opposed to him by the Walies of Almagreb—the Andalusians no less than the Zenetas. In the year 360, he was found to be in possession of all the principal fortresses of the state; and he then caused the Fatemite prince, Maad Ben Ismail, to be proclaimed in all the cities of the West, as had before been done by Gehwar El Rumi.

In the year 361, the Andalusian general Giaffar Ben Aly El Menusi, Wali of Salee and Erâb, defeated Jusef Zeiri, father of Balkin, general of Sanbaga, whom he slew in the battle; whereupon he sent the news of that victory to Cordova, by his brother Yahye Ben Aly, to whom King Alhakem showed much favour.

But the Zeneta generals, dreading the vengeance which Balkin could not but take for his father's death, resolved to seize Giaffar and give him up to the enemy, as a means of pacifying the latter, and gaining his good-will. Informed of this intention, Giaffar passed over into Spain, where he complained to King Alhakem of the perfidy and malignant cowardice displayed by the Zeneta generals; nor did he fail to be well received by his sovereign, who subsequently made him his Hagib; a charge which he retained until his

death, although that event did not take place until the reign of King Hixem, son of Alhakem Almostansir.

Aben Sohna relates, that in this same year Prince Maad Ben Ismail passed into Egypt, having in his train, and among his most familiar attendants, the Andalusian poet Alhasan Aben Heni Ben Muhamed, who was treacherously murdered on the road. Of this great genius, Aben Sohna further tells us, that in his unmeasured eulogies of Prince Maad he did not hesitate even to utter impieties and expressions that could not but be offensive to God. Maad Ben Ismaih entered the city of Cairo on the fifteenth of Ramazan, in the year 362.

In all these changes, the first to follow the party of the invaders was the Ameer Alhasan Ben Kenuz; forgetting the homage he had proffered, and his ancient alliance, with the many obligations he owed to the Omeyas of Spain, he caused Prince Maad to be proclaimed in all his towns; and in that obstinately contested struggle he assisted Balkin Ben Zeir against the Andalusians, through the whole of the sanguinary war that ensued.

When the accounts of Alhasan's disloyalty were brought to King Alhakem, he was much displeased. He commanded that ships should be prepared without delay in all the ports of Andalusia, being resolved to send a powerful army against Balkin Ben Zeir, and still more against the perfidious and ungrateful Ameer Alhasan Ben Kenuz.

Troops were assembled accordingly with great diligence. Tadmir, Elvira, Raya, and Algarve, all sent their banners at the appointed time; when the forces embarked under the command of the Wali Muhamad Ben Alcasim, of the family of the Meruans. From Algezira-Alhadra, that general then passed over to Medina Cebta, which he did in the moon of Rebie Primera of the year 362.

Nor were the troops of Andalusia permitted long to remain in repose. The Ameer Alhasan Ben Kenuz came forth against them with many of the Barbary Cabilas; and on the confines of Tangiers the two hosts met in battle. The place of combat was that known as Alfohos Beni Masrag; and there, after a stubborn fight, the troops o Andalusia were defeated. Their general, the Wali Muhamad Ben Alcasim, died sword in hand, as did many of the cavaliers of his host; others fled from the slaughter;

and of these, a part took refuge in Tangiers: while the remainder, flying to Cebta, shut themselves up in that city.

The Andalusian generals then wrote to Cordova, entreating King Alhakem to send them such a force as should enable them to oppose their enemies, who were well experienced in wars, as well as very numerous. Deeply grieved by the bad fortune of his arms, and that unhappy battle of Tangiers, the king commanded his Walies of the provinces to send him their banners; and having assembled a large force, with great store of provisions and large sums of gold, he entrusted the command of the expedition to the General Galib, called Sahib Garuba, a man of much valour, and well practised in matters of war. Giving this Wali his instructions, Alhakem told him that from his bravery he hoped not only the conquest of the enemy in battle, but the recovery of all the fortresses, and the subjection of that rebellious people.

When dismissing the General from his presence, Alhakem said:

"I do not permit thee to return but as victor or as a corpse. Thine object is to conquer; and with this in view, see that thou spare no effort and no cost; above all, let not avarice, or the wish to spare my treasure, be apparent in thy reward of the brave."

Galib thereupon departed from Cordova with a large body of cavalry, and immense stores of all things comprising the munitions of war. The setting forth of that army took place at the end of the moon Xawal in the year 362.*

The fame of the armament conducted by Galib did not fail to fly before it; and the Ameer Alhasan became alarmed. He abandoned the city of Biserta, taking from it his harem and all his treasures, which he bore to Hisn-Hijar Anosor, or the Rock of Eagles, a fortress considered inaccessible, and where he consequently believed his riches and his family to be placed in security. Galib Garuba was meanwhile crossing the sea, and passed from Alhadra to Alcazar de Masamuda, where he was opposed by Alhasan Ben Kenuz, with his Cabilas of Barbary; and against these troops he contended for some days, with varied fortune.

* A.D. 973.

But it now chanced, that by secret communications with the Xeques and Alcaldes of those tribes, Galib succeeded in persuading many of them to abandon Alhasan's party, for which he made them many large presents, with promises in still greater abundance. Some of these leaders passed at once over to his camp; and there were at length so many prevailed on to leave the host of Alhasan during one night, that when the next day broke, the Ameer discovered himself to be left alone with only the cavaliers of his own train to attend him. Finding this, he fled before the dawn had made greater progress, and took refuge in his fortress on the Rock of Eagles.

But Galib Garuba pursued him with all his cavalry; and being instantly afterwards followed by the whole host, they laid close siege to the place. Among other precautions, the Andalusian general then cut off the water which supported the defenders of the fortress, who were thus reduced to a fearful necessity.

Now among the royal army, there were men who, believing in auguries and soothsayings, had given rise to a report, that unless the fortress were surrendered within a given delay, their General would be lost, with all his host. This term was fast approaching, and fearful of the discouragement that might affect his troops if the siege were prolonged, Galib pressed on the preparations for assault with the utmost of his power, but at the same time sent proposals of surrender to the Ameer Alhasan, which the latter, finding himself without resources, was fain to accept. The Andalusian general then assured him of security for himself and his family, with the same for all the treasures he had stored in the fortress, or in other places of deposit. But he added the condition, that Alhasan should place his own person in the hands of the king's General, to be taken by him into Spain, there to await the pleasure of Alhakem Almostansir Billah.

These conditions were made in the moon of Muharram of the year 363; and on the same day Alhasan quitted the fortress with his family, surrendering the place to the General Galib Garuba.

The victor instantly dispatched an account of his success

to King Alhakem; and much rejoicing was then made in Cordova, where the reduction of the rebels had been anxiously desired. Galib then continued his efforts for the subjugation of the country. He conquered the generals, who still held out, in several actions; and eventually recovering the towns of Almagreb, he occupied all the fortresses, insomuch that there remained at length no Alcaidia in all the land, of which the the troops of Sanhaga could boast themselves the masters.

The General Galib next proceeded to Medina Fez, of which he also took possession, appointing Muhamad Ben Aly Fesus governor therein for the quarter of the Cairvanese, and Abdelkerim Ben Thalaba for that of the Andalusians.

Having thus tranquillized and restored to its allegiance the whole land of Almagreb, Galib Garuba then returned to Spain, taking with him the Ameer Alhasan Ben Kenuz, and many other nobles of the Edrisia and Caduta families, whom he had assembled from all the lordships and provinces of Almagreb, so that the Omeyas of Spain now remained in undisputed possession of all those dominions.

With this company of cavaliers, the General Galib departed from Medina Fez at the end of Ramazan in the year 363; and having arrived at Cebta, they there embarked in the Spanish ships, and set sail for Gezira-Alhadra. From that place Galib Garuba wrote to King Alhakem, giving notice of his arrival, and requesting permission to repair to Cordova with the Ameer Alhasan Ben Kenuz, his family, and the other cavaliers whom the general had brought in his company.

In reply to these letters, Alhakem dispatched his Forenicos, or couriers, according the permission desired, and requesting the General Galib to present himself forthwith at Cordova with all the Cavaliers by whom he was accompanied. The king also gave orders that the victorious General, with the company he brought, should be honourably received and entertained at all the Posadas on the way between the Coast and the Capital.

CHAP. XCII.—Of the arrival of the ameer alhasan ben kenuz in cordova, and of other events.

When these travellers had now approached the capital, and were within the Comarca of Cordova, King Alhakem Almostansir Billah commanded his nephew Abdelaziz Ben Almondhir, who was captain of his Andalusian guard, to go forth, with others of the principal Xeques and Viziers, for the purpose of receiving them; nay, the king himself, mounting his horse, followed some time after, accompanied by other generals of his guard and by many nobles, he also proceeding to some distance from the city with the same intent.

When the Ameer Alhasan Ben Kenuz beheld the king, he descended from his horse, as did the other Xeques of Almagreb, and prostrated himself at Alhakem's feet; but the latter raised him, and commanded that he should resume his seat in the saddle; the Xeques of Almagreb holding the stirrups as he did so. The whole company then entered the city, the population of which had come forth to receive them. The General Galib Garuba placed himself, by order of Alhakem, at that monarch's side; and thus they rode to the royal palace.

This great day, so much renowned in the annals of Cordova, was the first of Muharram, in the year 364. The concourse of people who crowded to see this triumph of Galib, and the Andalusian cavalry arriving from Almagreb, was innumerable.

When they reached the Alcazar, King Alhakem offered the Ameer Alhasan Ben Kenuz the shelter and protection of one of his own royal abodes, assigning to him the palace of Mogneiz as his dwelling, and that of his family; while to the other Xeques and cavaliers of the Beni Edris and Caduta races, he appointed a residence in other distinguished houses. Large revenues were assigned to Alhasan and all his company by the King Alhakem, and each was much gratified by the generosity of that sovereign, who was said to have spent more gold for those seven hundred cavaliers than had ever before been expended for seven thousand. Thus many of

them established their final residence at Cordova, and entered the service of the king.

But the Ameer Alhasan himself had not been long in Cordova before he begged permission from Alhakem to return, with his family, to Africa; and although much displeased at that request, the king would not refuse to grant it; yet as his Viziers were equally unwilling with himself to see the Ameer depart, he made it a condition of his consent that Alhasan should not take up his abode in Almagreb, but in the East of Africa, whither he offered to conduct him with his family and all his treasures, in ships of his own. Alhasan Ben Kenuz returned thanks for that condescension, and made haste to prepare for his departure.

Now among the valuables possessed by the Ameer was a mass of amber of extraordinary size, which had been found floating on the sea coast during the time of his sovereignty in Almagreb; and as the King Alhakem had heard of this wonderful production, and manifested a desire to see it, the Ameer was compelled to offer that rarity to his acceptance, as a parting gift, although it was not without reluctance that he did so. Alhakem commanded that the present should be placed among his treasures, and it was there preserved accordingly until the end of the dynasty of the Omeyas, when it returned to the house of Alhasan.

The Ameer then departed with his family and his riches, embarking at Almeria in the ships of King Alhakem, and passing, after a fortunate voyage, to the city of Tunis, where he arrived in the year 365. From Tunis he repaired to Egypt, with the sons of his uncle, where he sought a shelter from Nazar Ben Maad, Soldan of Africa and Egypt, who received him very kindly, assured him of his protection, and offered him aid against all his enemies. Alhasan Ben Kenuz remained there accordingly a very considerable time; and that same year the Soldan wrote a boastful and haughty letter to King Alhakem, threatening him with his whole power, and calling him the usurper of the States of Almagreb. But the most extraordinary part of the matter was, that this very Soldan had but just completed his own forcible seizure of Egypt,—and was oppressing the people of that country with the most unheard-of cruelty.

In this year, King Alhakem made Giaffar, son of his

Hagib Othman Abulhasan, captain of his guard. This Giaffar had the year before been Governor of Majorca. To the office of Cadi of the Aljama of Cordova, the king appointed the learned Sevillian Ahmed Ben Abdelmelic Ben Haxem, known as El Mocui, and who had twice before been elected to that charge, but had each time declined to accept it. Ahmed Ben Abdelmelic belonged to the council of state, and stood very high in the estimation of the king, to whom he had presented a very learned book treating of the policy of princes, and comprising numerous maxims of good government. The book consisted of no less than one hundred chapters; Ahmed Ben Abdelmelic had been assisted in the composition thereof by the wise Obeidala El Moaiti, and the work was so entirely acceptable to King Alhakem, that he proved his admiration of the authors by making them both members of his Mexuar or Council of State, where they were the worthy colleagues of that distinguished sage, the Cadi Aben Zaibi, who was President of that assembly.

To the renowned historian Ahmed Ben Said El Hamdani, King Alhakem presented a beautiful house in Medina Azahra, where he occupied himself with the composition of a truly noble work,—even his History of Spain. The king also gave a house near the royal palace to Jusuf Ben Harûn El Arramedi, known as Abu Amar, who was reported to be the most distinguished among all the men of genius then flourishing at Cordova. He had presented to Alhakem two elegant poems,—one on the Chase, the other on the duties and obligations of Chivalry.

Of Jusuf Ben Harûn, Abulwalid Ben El Fardi relates the following story, which he received from his own lips, and repeats in the words of Jusuf:—

"I had one day gone forth, after the prayer of the Juma," says Ben Harûn, "and passing along the bank of the Guadalquiver, I came to the gardens of Beni Meruan. There I met a slave girl of most extraordinary beauty; never in all my life had I seen one whose grace and loveliness could equal those displayed in her person. I saluted her, and she replied with infinite perfection of manner; for not only was she pleasing, but in the highest degree modest and discreet. The tone of her voice in speaking was of a sweetness that rejoiced the ears,

and entered through them to the soul, insomuch that the grace of her person, the melody of her voice, and the charm of her words, deprived me of my self-government, and subjugated my heart.

Then I said to her: "Now, by Allah, I conjure thee to tell me! am I to call thee sister or mother?" And she replied:

"Thou mayst call me mother, if it so please thee." Whereupon I continued:

"And can I merit to know what is thy name?" To which she made answer and said: "I am called Halewa."

"Under happy auspices,"* said I, "did they give thee that sweet name." But now, as the hour of Alazar was approaching, the damsel commenced her return towards the city, while I followed close on her steps.

When we came to the bridge, she said to me: "By Allah! either go forward or remain at greater distance behind me, that decorum be preserved, and no sin committed."

Then said I: "And shall this, by my unhappy fate, be the last conversation that I may hope to hold with thee?" To which she replied: "No, certainly, it shall not be the last, if thou desire to have it renewed."

"But when, then," said I, "may I have the good fortune to meet thee again?"

"Every Juma," she replied, "at the same hour, and in the same place." Saying this, the damsel departed and was gone.

And now, as saith Aben Amar, there will be no need to ask if I found my way to the gardens of the Beni Meruan on the following Juma, which appeared to me to be a long year in arriving. I went forth, as in the first case, from the bridge; and in the gardens I found the damsel, who

* The words of the original are here, "Con buenas fadas;" and "Hacer buenas fadas" was the phrase used among the Moslemah of Spain, according to our author, to express the festival always held on giving a child its name, which was done on the eighth day after its birth. The father or grandfather of the infant whispered into its ear the name which he had determined to bestow on it after due invocation of Allah; a part of the food prepared for the occasion was then given to the poor, or, if the parents were rich, the hair of the child was weighed, and its weight in gold was distributed to the needy.

appeared to me even more beautiful than before. We saluted each other; and our confidence increased as we returned to the city; when we were about to separate, I inquired, "What price would thine owner ask for thee, if he were covetous of money to such a degree as to be capable of selling thee?" And she answered me: "Three hundred mitcales of gold."

Then said I to myself: "That is not a great price to pay for so rich a treasure."

Now at this time it chanced that I was compelled to journey to Saragossa, where I visited the Governor Abderahman Ben Muhamad, presenting him with a copy of verses, which have since become well known, and in which I described the graces and beauties of the exquisite Halewa. I furthermore related to the Wali my adventure. He then presented me with the three hundred mitcales of gold, which I diminished only by the costs of the journey, returning with rapid flight to my desired Cordova and the longed-for gardens of the Beni Meruan.

But alas! and woe to my heart! I could there find no trace of her whom I sought. My hopes being lost, I disposed myself to return to my native place, and was taking leave of one of my friends at the door of his house, when he requested me to enter, led me into his apartment, and invited me to accept a seat on the divan. He rose up presently afterwards, being compelled to leave the lower room in search of certain papers. Then a woman, covered with a veil, who was also in the apartment, but at whom I had not before ventured to look with curiosity, rose suddenly from her seat and, lifting her veil, exclaimed:

"Is it possible that thou dost not know me?"

Thereupon mine eyes were instantly dazzled by the beauty of Halewa herself, and I answered, trembling: "Oh! heaven! what do I see! what do I hear! Didst thou not tell me that thou wert the slave of—such an one?"

"Certainly I did tell thee so," she replied, with a troubled voice; and was about to proceed, when her lord returned, and we were both compelled to be silent.

Then I prayed to God to strengthen my heart, which I felt sinking in my bosom; and, fearing lest the paleness of my face should betray me, I complained of a sudden indis-

position, and, excusing myself to my friend, departed from the house. It was on this occasion that I wrote those seven canzonets to that beautiful slave, which so greatly pleased my friends, while they equally offended the master of Halewa, and were the cause of her misfortune as well as mine.

And the matter was on this wise: King Alhakem Ben Abderahman conceived a wish to behold a slave so highly eulogised, and so warmly sung by the poet; wherefore, knowing that Abu Aby El Cali had her in his house, he contrived to pay her a visit during the Azala of the Juma, which had been appointed for the entry of those Envoys sent by the king of the Christians.

Now on that day, the Cadi Mondhir Ben Said El Boluti, so called from a country-house in the vicinity of Cordova, called Fohos Albolût, was to preside in the Aljama, and the king desired the Cadi to prolong his discourse through all the time of the Envoy's entrance, knowing that Abu Aly, the owner of the beautiful slave, would not fail to be then in the Aljama, and wishing him to be detained there as long as possible. And in effect, the Cadi Mondhir, who was a good speaker and had a fine voice, did prolong his discourse, as he had been desired, but at the end, and surely with malicious intent, he said:

"To-day I have spoken at some length, seeing that the youthful hearer, who is no friend to long discourses, is not present to-day, because she is detained by the king, as it were in a corner, in a certain lonely part of the city; and if it had not been for the king—whose enjoyments may God prolong—I should not be here myself, since there is scarcely any one to listen, but should be gazing with the multitude who throng the way to behold the Envoys of the Christian, since I also am as fond of new things and strange sights as any other man."

From this visit there sprang jealousy and discords. The poet Arramedi fell into disgrace with the king, and was thrown into prison; while the damsel got into trouble with her master.

Homaidi relates of this Jusuf Arramedi, that while he was in prison he wrote eulogies on King Alhakem Ben Abderahman, with a book treating of birds, wherein he described all the properties and qualities of those beautiful creatures

in very elegant verses. He likewise wrote a supplication to Prince Hixem, entreating him to intercede with his father, King Alhakem, for the restoration of his liberty.

Homaidi adds, that he had seen a copy of that ingenious work on birds, which was one of great perfection and high value, for the beauty of its execution as well as the excellence of the subject matter.

CHAP. XCIII.—OF THE OATH OF ALLEGIANCE TAKEN TO PRINCE HIXEM BEN ALHAKEM, WITH NOTICES OF CERTAIN OF THE WISE MEN OF ANDALUSIA.

To gratify the Sultana Sobeiha, mother of Prince Hixem, the declaration that her son was heir to the crown was made in Cordova with extraordinary magnificence, although the prince was then but a child. The Walies of the principal Capitanias, or military districts, the Viziers and Alcatibes, or secretaries, with the generals of military districts, and the Alcaldes of Coras, or Circles, from all the provinces, were convoked for that purpose, when there were great festivals and rejoicings.

On this occasion, many elegant compositions in verse were presented to the king, who loved poetry exceedingly; some of these effusions were composed by the most distinguished men of letters then in Spain. The verses of Aben Amar Arremedi were particularly admired, as were those of Ahmed Ben Ferag of Jaen, with some that were composed by Abdallah, brother of the latter; but neither Aben Amar nor Ahmed Ben Ferag, who were both in prison, recovered their liberty on that account; and of those two accomplished persons it was said, that they were like the nightingales, whose sweet and admirable songs not unfrequently cost them the freedom of their lives.

Aben Ferag, of Jaen, had been the compiler of that select collection of poems entitled "The Gardens," which he had presented to King Alhakem at the commencement of his reign, when Ahmed Ben Ferag was much favoured by that monarch, at whose hands he received many large rewards and especial marks of distinction. The collection of Ahmed

Ben Ferag was esteemed by all the learned, whether of the east or west, even more than was that of Abi Becri Ben Daud El Ispahani, which he entitled "The Flowers."

It is true that many of the poems found in "The Flowers" are also inserted in "The Gardens;" and the latter is, like the former, divided into one hundred chapters, each of which contains one hundred separate pieces; but the work of Ahmed Ferag has not a single line which is not written by a Spanish poet, and the book is one of great value. Yet the poor Ahmed, despite these claims to consideration, having fallen into disgrace with the king, continued a captive all the remainder of his days, and ended his life in prison.

In addition to those noble spirits at that time flourishing in Cordova, there were many men of remarkable genius distinguishing themselves in the provinces; as, for example, the Cadi of Badajoz, Abu Walid Ben Jonas Ben Abdallah, the fame of whose ability caused the king to invite him to the capital of Cordova.

But Abu Walib soon became weary of the noise and hollow vanities of a city. He longed for the restoration of his quiet; and requesting Alhakem's permission to retire from the Court,* he betook himself to a solitary retreat in Algarve, where he wrote many books of an ascetic character, in manifestation of his contempt for the turmoils of human life.

Gratitude to king Alhakem, and the force of his own genius, were also manifested, on the occasion of the solemnity above alluded to, by the Granadine, Aben Isa El Gasani, who then presented to Alhakem his well-known "Treatise on Geography," with an elegant "Description of the Comarcas of Elvira." The first of these works he had completed during certain travels, undertaken by order of the king, into Egypt and other countries of the East.

Among the learned men of Guadalajara who likewise distinguished themselves at the taking of the Oath of Allegiance, were Ahmed Ben Chalaf Ben Muhamad Ben Fortun El Madyuni, and Ahmed Ben Muza Ben Yanqui.

* Ah, Jonas of my heart! the wiser man you; and the rather if one might but have hoped that you had taken care to secure the essential "one," to whom you could say "how pleasant is this solitude:" but what follows is in direct prohibition of that hope.

The latter, after having studied in his native place under the renowned Walib Ben Masera, and at Toledo with Abderahman Ben Isa Ben Modareg, passed on to the East. He subsequently went to Egypt, and visited Mecca, whence he returned in time to arrive in Cordova at the moment of the great ceremony. Abderahman Ben Isa was accompanied by Ben Sadic Ben Chalaf Ben Babil of Toledo, a citizen of Bargas, who had been visiting the Temple of Alaksa, and was then on his return.

The essays of Ibrahim Ben Chaira Abu Ishac were likewise much admired on the occasion now in question. This writer, called also Aben Asbag, of Seville, was greatly renowned for his descriptive poems. The works of Suleiman Ben Batal, of Badajoz, were in like manner much applauded. He had received the name of Ain Gudi, because many of his verses commence with that phrase, which may be interpreted "Happy eyes." Other persons gave equally brilliant proofs of their genius at the same time; and among them was Suleiman Ben Chalaf Ben Amer, known as Aben Gamron of Cordova, who had been Cadi of Ecija, and is now living in the Capital, his abode being in the Chandac, or fosse of the suburb of Arregegila. Him the king made Vizier of his council.

Yahye Ben Hixem El Meruani was another of those fortunate sons of song whose voices were raised on that great occasion, as was that learned poet of Cordova, Yahye Ben Hudheil. Jonas Ben Mesaud, of the Rusafa of Cordova, likewise came forth at the same auspicious moment. He was the author of the "Description of the Gardens."

Nor was Yaix Ben Said, of Baena, absent; but he was then distinguished principally for the marvellous elegance of the copies which he made of such poems as obtained the preference and were distinguished by the approbation of King Alhakem.

And now, since learning and poetry were so much esteemed in Spain, it was found that even the women had become studious in their retirement; nor were there wanting many who distinguished themselves for their good and ingenious compositions. King Alhakem had, for example, a very beautiful damsel in his Alcazar at Lobna, who was learned in grammar, loved poetry, and was well skilled in

arithmetic and other sciences; she was a singularly elegant writer also, and composed very beautiful letters.

Of her services King Alhakem often availed himself, when he had letters of secret import to prepare; and there was no one in the palace who could equal her for the acuteness of her perceptions, the force and the elegance of her style, the propriety of her thoughts, or the sweetness of her numbers.

There was also a certain Fatima, the daughter of Zacaria El Xablêri, a servant of the Royal House, whose writing was of great perfection, and who copied manuscripts for the king; with Ayxa the daughter of Ahmed Ben Muhamad, Cadim of Cordova, who was much renowned for her learning and other qualities: of her, Aben Hayan discourses to the effect that there was no damsel in Spain who could surpass her in beauty or in the praiseworthy manner of her life, while there were few who could approach the distinction to which Ayxa had attained in erudition, eloquence, and poetry. She wrote eulogies on the various kings and princes of her time, and all admired the merit of her compositions, as well as the beautiful characters in which they were written, whether on paper or vellum.

A very precious collection of books on the Arts and Sciences, was made by Cadfa the daughter of Giaffar Ben Noseir El Temimi, who composed good verses also, which she furthermore sang with a voice of wonderful sweetness. Maryem, the daughter of Abu Jacub, El Faisoli of Xilbe, was the instructress in erudition and poetry of damsels belonging to the principal families of Seville, where she taught with much renown, and from her school it was that many maidens who subsequently rendered themselves illustrious by their graces and acquirements, came forth to form the delight of the palaces of princes and great nobles.

Radhia, called the Fortunate Star, the freed-woman of King Abderahman Anasir Ledinallah, by whom she was resigned to his son the Prince Alhakem, was the admiration of her age for her elegant verses and for the profound learning displayed in her historical works. After the death of the king, the Fortunate Star travelled much in the East, where she was applauded by the learned in all parts, and wherever she appeared the renown of Radhia was found to have gone before her.

Following the example of the King, his Walies, Viziers, and powerful Xeques, whether of the capital or in the provinces, protected learning and honoured men of genius, never losing an opportunity for making manifest the esteem in which they held the acquirements of such persons.

Alcasim Ben Asbag of Baeni, speaking of the Cadi of Cordova, Muhamad Ben Ishac Ben Selim, informs us that he was indeed an austere and dignified person, but, when the occasion presented itself, was ever proved to be as affable as he was learned: Aben Asbag relates of him a story which he repeats from the Cadi Jonas, who tells it as follows:—

"On the banks of the Guadalquiver at Cordova, and near the Fountains, there dwelt Aben Safaran El Xeibani, near whose house the Cadi Muhamad Ben Ishac was one day passing on horseback, when he was overtaken by rain, which compelled him to seek a shelter. He therefore entered the Dihliz or Court of El Xeibani, where he sat on his horse proposing to await the return of fair weather.

But Aben Safaran coming forth from his apartment, entreated the Cadi to alight, and Muhamad Ben Ishac accompanied him to his habitation. The compliments of reception having being exchanged, and the guest being seated in the place of honour, El Xeibani said:—

"I have a damsel of this city in my house, who hath the sweetest voice that can be heard, and if it please thee to listen, she shall sing thee an Axara* from the Book of God, or if thou prefer them, verses chosen at thy pleasure."

The Cadi replied:—"In happy hour! be it as thou hast said;" when a damsel more lovely than human eyes had

* The Moslemah divide the Koran into one hundred and fourteen Suras or Chapters of somewhat unequal length, and each Sura they furthermore divide into Hizbes or Sections, which are finally subdivided into a certain number of Axaras or minor divisions, which may be called chapters, each containing ten verses, and the Alcoranic verse is called Aleya. At the commencement of each Sura is given the title thereof, with the number of verses it contains, and whether made public in Mecca or Medina. The whole work they call "The Book of God," and the "Tanzil," or "Descended from Heaven." The word Alcoran means the lecture or reading *par excellence*, and to be Mocri or Reader of the Koran in the Aljamas was an employment of distinction. They read with a clear, high, and sounding voice, and the manner of reading adopted for the Koran is called Tala.—*Condé.*

ever beheld, came forth. El Xeibani first commanded her to read, and having done so, she then sang certain verses, all which appeared to the Cadi to be very well done; whereupon, taking a purse from his girdle, but without being perceived, he concealed it beneath the cushions of the Divan. The rain having ceased, Aben Selim rose to take his leave, and having thanked his host he departed.

El Xeibani attended his guest to the door, and having seen the Cadi mount on horseback, re-entered his apartment, when he found the purse, which contained twenty gold doubloons; it was placed between the cushions, and but just visible at the edge of the Divan.

Of Ahmed Ben Said of Toledo, likewise, there is much related in celebration of the learning and high qualities which he displayed. This Ahmed Ben Said Ben Cautar El Ansari was an Alfaqui of that city, rich and respected above most men of his time; he was accustomed to assemble in his house a company of forty friends, all lovers of learning, and some of whom were from Calatrava, or other towns yet more distant from his home, but the greater number of them belonged to Medina Toledo.

In the months of November, December, and January, it was the custom of Ahmed Ben Said to receive his visitors in a large hall, the pavement of which was covered with carpets of silk and woollen stuff; the cushions being made of materials equally warm, and the walls having hangings of carpets and embroidered linens. In the midst of the hall was a large tube, the height of a man, filled with lighted charcoal, and around this all the guests took their place, each at such distance as best suited him. A Hizbe or Section of the Koran was then read, and each giving his judgment respecting it, a profitable discussion ensued. Perfumes of musk and other grateful aromatics were diffused through the apartment, which was furthermore besprinkled with sweet waters. After this had endured a certain time, a repast was served, composed of excellent meats in rich abundance, young kids for example, and the flesh of rams, with other dishes prepared in oil; then followed milk in curds and other forms; after which came a variety of sweet dishes, with butter, dates, and choice fruits of various kinds.

During the shortest days of the season, the company

passed the greater part of their time at table, these conferences enduring till the end of the month of January; nor was there any man in the city whose generosity equalled that of Ahmed Ben Said Ben Cautar, although there were many very rich men therein.

The King appointed this Alfaqui to be Prefect of the Law Courts in the city of Toledo; but his fame and popularity having awakened the enmity of Yaix Ben Muhamad, who was Cadi of the Tribunals, this man hired an assassin to take the life of Ahmed. The murderer, who was well known in the house of the Alfaqui, entered the apartment where the latter sat reading the Koran; but on perceiving the expression of the assassin's face, Ben Cautar said—

"I know wherefore thou art come. Do that which thou hast been commanded to do. God sits enthroned in heaven; He sees all and knows all."

The murderer then suffocated his victim, but by help of the Cadi Yaix Ben Muhamad they made the death of Ahmed Ben Said to appear a natural one.

So is the matter related by many, but, according to Abu Meruan Ben Hayan Ben Chalf, the death of this distinguished Alfaqui was caused by poison administered to him at Santarem, in the year of the Hegira 403.

CHAP. XCIV.—Of certain remarkable events in the government of king Alhakem Ben Abderahman, and of his death.

Now the King Alhakem Ben Abderahman, called Almostansir Billah, endeavoured to obtain for his only son, Prince Hixem, the most learned masters that could be found, either in the East or the West; and among others whom he secured for his benefit was Muhamad Ben Alhasen, Ben Abdallah Ben Mezhag El Zubeidi, a native of Seville, but an inhabitant of Cordova, who had adopted the name of Abu Becri.

This Muhamad had been the disciple of Casim Ben Asbag and of Said Ben Fahlon: he had studied languages under Ahmed Ben Said, and poetry with Abu Aly El Bagdadi. In the Arabic language and its grammar, Zubeidi was the

most learned man then known, and to teach these to the Prince was his especial occupation. He wrote many books of considerable merit, and among his works was a compendium* of the celebrated Dictionary called "Ain," a labour in which, by order of King Alhakem, Muhamad was assisted by the illustrious poet Abu Aleg El Bagdadi, and by the accomplished general Muhamed Ben Abi Husein, who was captain of the guard. Zubeidi was made President of the Tribunals of Cordova by Alhakem Almostansir Billah, and by Prince Hixem he was subsequently honoured with the charge of many other important offices.

The master of Hixem in historical traditions was Alcasim Aben Asbag, of Baena, while Muhamad Ben Chatib El Lezdi instructed him in general literature and the art of poetry; he had besides another master in the same accomplishment, who was no other than Tobni of Zâb, an illustrious poet of his time, who was a favourite Wali of King Alhakem Almostansir Billah.

A sincere lover of peace was King Alhakem, and he laboured to maintain it even with the Christians, although much against the wish of his warlike Walies commanding on the frontier. It is related of this monarch that in all the counsels given by him to his son Hixem he was accustomed to conclude with the following,—"Make no war that can be avoided; maintain peace for thy own felicity and that of the people, and never draw thy sword but against the unjust and oppressor. What pleasure can any man find in destroying towns, ruining states, and bearing desolation and death to the uttermost confines of the earth? Let thy people live peaceably under the shelter of justice, and be not dazzled by the false maxims of vanity. Let thine integrity be as a lake ever clear and pure, moderate the desire of thine eyes, put a bridle on the impetuosity of thy wishes, confide in God, and thou shalt arrive at the appointed term of thy days in serenity of soul."

King Alhakem Almostansir Billah commanded that a register should be made, and an account taken of all the towns in his states, when it was found that there were in

* An ancient copy of this compendium by El Zubeidi will be found in the Royal Library of Madrid.—*Condé.*

Spain six great cities of the first class, capitals of capitanias or military districts, eighty of the second class, large cities, each with a great population, and three hundred of the third class. The villages, hamlets, forts, castles, and farms were innumerable; in the district watered by the Guadalquiver alone there were twelve thousand.

Certain of the authorities, speaking on this subject, affirm that in Cordóva there were twelve hundred thousand houses, six hundred mosques, fifty hospitals, eighty public schools, and nine hundred baths for the use of the public. The revenues of the state amounted yearly to twelve millions of gold mitcales, without counting those of the Azaque or tithe paid in kind. There were numerous mines of gold, silver, and other metals in the kingdom, some of which were worked for the benefit of the king, and some for that of private owners of the property. Those in the mountains of Jaen, Bulcha, and Aroche, were exceedingly rich, as also were those of the mountains of the Tagus in the Spanish Algarve. There were likewise enumerated not a few mines of precious stones, two of which, those in the vicinity of Beza and of Malaga respectively, yielded the red jacinth or ruby. There were pearls, moreover, plentifully fished on the coast near Tarragona, and corals were found on the sea-coast of Andalusia.

During the long peace maintained by King Alhakem the knowledge of agriculture made great progress in all the provinces of Spain; conduits for watering the fields were constructed in the plains of Granada, Murcia, Valencia, and Arragon; and for the same purpose Albuheras or great reservoirs, in the manner of lakes, were formed at convenient points. Extensive plantations also were made in all the provinces, each being carefully supplied with such trees as were suitable to the climate and the qualities of the soil.

At a word, that good king turned the lances and swords of his people into spades and ploughshares, converting the warlike and restless spirits of the Moslemah into the quiet minds of peaceful shepherds and labourers. The most illustrious cavaliers took pride in cultivating their gardens with their own hands, and the Cadies and Al-

faquies reposed joyfully under the shadow of trees planted by themselves. Men found pleasure as well as health in their fields, and willingly abandoned the turmoil of cities for the more simple dwellings of the village and hamlet; some resorting to these abodes in the flowery Spring-time, others preferring the richer glows of Autumn or the season of the vintage, when the fruit of the grape, not abused to the injury of man's powers, but used reasonably, with other fruits of the earth, were gathered into his garners, with abundant wealth of similar products. Many among the people also, pursuing their natural inclinations,* devoted themselves to the care of their flocks, and resuming the ancient life of the Bedouins, transferred themselves from one province to another, thus obtaining the pasturage needful to their flocks in both seasons of the year.

Now Jusuf Ben Hamad El Sadfi, Cadi of Cebta, which was his native place, held frequent discourse with King Alhakem Almostansir Billah, in relation to the great wisdom possessed by Abdallah Ben Ibrahim El Omeya of Asila, in the territory of Tangiers, insisting much on the renown he had obtained for the same, and on the estimation in which he was held throughout the East; wherefore King Alhakem Ben Abderahman sent letters to that sage, requesting him to pass over into Spain, and being intreated at the same time by the Cadi of Cebta, Abdallah consented after some delay to comply with their

* From the most remote antiquity the Arabs were known as dwellers in the fields, ever wandering to seek pastures for their flocks. The Prophet Isaiah, announcing the desolation of Babylon, says that the city shall become a frightful waste, "where not even an Arab shall pitch his tent, or the herdsman take his mid-day sleep." Cotaiba speaks of them as unable to live in any other manner than that of passing their days in a continual search for pasture to be the sustenance of their flocks; and he compares them to the Cranes, who, as saith Damir, "*hold their summer feasts in Irak or Chaldea, and their winter festivals amidst the arbours of Egypt and in the lands of the setting sun.*" These Arabs being called "Moedinos," "Wanderers or Vagabonds,"—that name may have become changed by an alteration easily made, and from these may proceed the name of our Merino flocks, which still continue this Arabian manner of life.—*Condé.*

request, arriving at the port of Almeria, where he disembarked. This distinguished person was of a family which had happily originated in Sidonia, a city of Andalusia, and of the most illustrious parentage; but he had repaired to Cairvan in Egypt and thence to Iraca, whence he was invited to Spain by King Alhakem, as above related.

The same monarch performed many public works of great importance in the different provinces of the kingdom: he built and repaired mosques, erected fountains in the towns, and on the high roads caused menciles or public posadas to be constructed for the reception of travellers; among others that ancient and renowned one at Libla, which is called the Menzil Haxemia.

Many bridges and aqueducts were likewise erected or repaired by King Alhakem Ben Abderahman, called Almostansir Billah.

The government of Badajos and its Comarcas he entrusted to the Persian Sabûr, his Chamberlain,—a much trusted servant, who was a very learned man, more especially versed in the knowledge of civil polity and the rule of princes.

About the time now in question died Muhamad Ben Abdelwalib, Governor of Jaen, a man of great genius, who had enjoyed the confidence of the King Abderahman Anasir Ledinallah, as well as that of his son Alhakem. In the days of his youth this Muhamad had been at strife with the Vizier, Abdelmelic Ben Gehwar, on account of a discussion relating to the superiority of their respective positions, and many right note-worthy facts might here be related of their disputes. Aben Gehwar was the Wali Bait El Maul, or Prefect of the Treasury, and a writer of extraordinary genius. Isa Ben Ahmed El Razi tells us that his poetical compositions were of such elegance as to have been more than once attributed to Zeidun of Cordova; but more than all beside hath been lauded his "Canzonet" describing the excellencies of the Rose, which many declare to surpass the "Spring" of Abdallah, the son of Alhakem El Coreixi, and even the description of the Rain, for which last that author is nevertheless admired by the whole world.

King Alhakem Almostansir Billah was not only a just and able judge of merit in others, and a ready appreciator of

genius wherever it was to be found, but was himself a very good poet. And, indeed, at that time, poetry was considered one of the principal objects in the education of an accomplished cavalier: wherefore he had been early taught to understand it, and in his youth was accustomed to be exercised in every kind of metre. Certain verses composed by him still remain, and Abdelmelic Ben Meruan Aben Hayan tells us that they were composed on the occasion of his separation from the Sultana Sobeiha, mother of Prince Hixem, at the time when he departed to the attack of Santistefan de Gormaz. They have been reproduced in the collection of Abu Aly El Hassan Ben Ayoub, and, with some variations, by Muhayer El Dilemi. The sense of that poem is as follows:—

From thy sweet eyes, in that sad hour of parting
There fell hot tears: but thine! they bathed thy cheek,
And lay upon thy loveliest neck, a circlet
Of pearls beyond all price; my tears were rubies*
Of purple glow,† and now, e'en now, sweet love,
I marvel that the heart within me break not.
For fain would then my soul have ta'en her flight.
The tears that drowned mine eyes were not from them,
But from my heart; and they betrayed their source
By that deep tint which never comes but thence!

I know not how it chanced that the fierce flame
Of that atrocious grief consumed me not.
Maddening I asked, "Where is my light of life?
My heart's sole treasure, where? Yet there in truth
There didst thou lurk! aye, in my heart of hearts,
Where thou art ever; Pole-star of my life.
Soul of my soul! mine own! mine own Sobeiha!

It would demand a long discourse to describe the virtues and greatness of this wise king, and the prosperity Spain enjoyed under his rule. Yet did the days of his life pass as do delightful dreams, which depart and leave us but imperfect records of their illusions. He was removed to the eternal abodes of another life, where he, like all other men,

* The original has "sapphires," but we have adopted the word rubies as coming nearer to the true import of the phrase.—TR.

† He means to say that his tears were of blood that came from his heart.—*Condé.*

will have found such a dwelling as was constructed for him before his death, by his good or evil works. King Alhakem died at Medina Azarah, on the second day of the moon Safar, in the year 366, and in the sixty-sixth year of his age, the period of his reign having been fifteen years, five months, and three days.

The bier of their sovereign was accompanied to the tomb by all the cavaliers of the city, and by a concourse innumerable of the people, who had come for that purpose from the Comarcas. King Alhakem was interred in his sepulchre at the cemetery of the Rusafa; the prayer was made for him by his son Hixem, who descended into the tomb, and when he came forth from that silent abode was unable to restrain his tears.

CHAP. CXV.—Of the reign of Hixem el muyad billah.

The funeral pomps of Alhakem Almostansir Billah having been solemnized, his son Hixem was proclaimed in his stead. That prince was then but ten years and some months old; he was the only son of the King Alhakem; his mother was the Sultana Sobeiha,* and they called him El Muyad Billah, which being interpreted is "The Assisted or Protected of God." The oath of allegiance to the new monarch was taken with much solemnity, and amidst a vast concourse of all the Walies, Viziers, Cadies, and other great ministers of State. The ceremony took place on Monday, the fifth day of the moon Safar, in the year 366, and the lecture of inauguration was read by Giaffar Ben Otman El Mushafi, the Hagib, known as Abulhassan El Berberi, who had been Wali of Majorca in the time of King Abderahman Anasir Ledi-

* Sobeiha is the Aurora. Our Arabs always gave their daughters names of agreeable signification: as for example—Radhia, the mild or placid; Niama, Grace; Noeima, the graceful; Saida, the happy; Soeida, the fortunate; Selima, the peaceful; Amina, the faithful; Zahra, a flower; Zahira, flowery; Zohraita, the delicate; Florinda, the prosperous; Boriha, Clara, the illustrious; Safia, the chosen, the select, or the pure; Leila, the welcome; Naziha, the delicious; Kerima, Honora, or the honourable; Kinza, the treasure; Lulu, the pearl; Lobua, the fair; Kethira, the fruitful; Maliha, the lovely, &c. &c.—*Condé.*

nallah; he was one of the Viziers of King Alhakem Almostansir Billah, and had on that day been appointed Hagib to King Hixem.

The Sultana Sobeiha, mother of Hixem, had gained the whole heart of Alhakem,, and that by her discretion even more effectually than by her beauty. For more than ten years he had done nothing, whether of greater or less importance; whether in his palace, in the court, or in the most distant provinces, without consulting the Sultana Sobeiha: her very lightest insinuations were sovereign commandments with Alhakem: he obeyed them without hesitation or delay.

The secretary of the Sultana, Muhamad Ben Abdallah Ben Abi Amer El Moaferi, was a person whose bravery, gentleness, affability, and excellence of all kinds had obtained the esteem of every good man. His consummate prudence had secured him the confidence of both the king and queen, while his known integrity and firmness commanded the esteem of all the Viziers of the royal house. The captains of the guard, with the Walies and Governors of all the provinces, held Muhamad Ben Abdallah Ben Amer in high respect and consideration; nor did the people at large fail to estimate the excellence of his qualities. The father of Muhamad Abdallah Ben El Walid Ben Yezed Ben Abdelmelic was a native of Cordova, although his family was originally of Algezira Alhadra. He called himself Abu Hafs, and was a very learned man, having been the disciple of Muhamad Ben Omar Ben Lubeha, of Ahmed Ben Chalid, of Muhamad Ben Foteis of Elvira, and of the renowned Muhamad El Begi. He was greatly honoured and respected by the King Abderahman Anasir Ledinallah; and having obtained that monarch's permission, he repaired to the East, where he made his Alhig, or holy pilgrimage; but when on his return from that sacred duty Abdallah Ben Abdelmelic fell sick at Trabalos, and, according to Ben Meruan Ben Hayan, could get no further than Roqueda, where he died, and was buried with much honour. This event took place towards the close of the reign of King Abderahman.*

* Hayan further relates that this Abdallah was a descendant of

His son Muhamad* was born in the year 327, at Toros, a village of the Comarca of Algezira. He was sent to Cordova when a child of tender age, and there studied the languages. At the death of his father, he was among the pages of the King Alhakem. Early distinguished for his ability and excellent qualities of various kinds, Muhamad Ben Abdallah received the appointment of secretary to the Sultana Sobeiba, and afterwards became her Major domo, or Lord Steward of the Household.

Considering the tender age of King Hixem her son, the Sultana now charged this truly worthy man with the care of the government, appointing him the principal Hagib of the youthful monarch; nay, rather the tutor of his person, as well as first minister of state and war. There was no man who did not applaud this prudent choice, except the Hagib Giaffar Ben Othman and his sons, who looked upon it as a proof of contempt for their great and ancient services; but they dissembled their secret resentment, and put a fair face on the matter.

The King Hixem, as well from his extreme youth as from his natural disposition, thought only of the games and innocent pleasures proper to a child. He never went forth from his palaces and the delicious gardens by which they were surrounded,—desired no other recreations than those there provided for him, and being constantly attended by little slaves of his own age, he lived wholly with them, and held communication with none beside. Nay, when the Persian Sabur, who had been chamberlain to the late King Alhakem, and had come from Merida for the oath of allegiance taken to the new sovereign on his accession, wished to speak with the young Hixem before his return to his province, the Sultana Sobeiba, in concert with the Hagib Muhamad Ben Abdallah, excused herself from permitting the king to receive that visit, and Sabur instantly departed to Algarve;

Abdelmelic of Walib, who had accompanied Taric Ben Zeyad on his first arrival in Spain, and was present at the commencement of the conquest.—*Condé.*

* We find it furthermore related by the same author, that the mother of Muhamad Abdallah, afterwards called Almanzor, or the Illustrious Victor, was Borina, the daughter of Yahye Ben Zacariah El Temimi, known as Aben Bartal.—*Ibid.*

the rest of the Walies also leaving the capital for their respective governments, without having been admitted to the presence of their young sovereign.

The Hagib Muhamad Ben Abdallah, conducting himself with infinite prudence, contrived to obtain the favour and friendship of all the principal persons about the court, and not of them only, but of other nobles, to whom he did great honour, giving proof of much courtesy and affability to every man. His attentions to men distinguished by their reputation for wisdom were particularly marked. He admitted them to his house at all times, and was never weary of granting them favours. At a word, a man remarkable for his merit was certain of the Hagib's protection: to whatever class he might belong, Muhamad attached each to his service, and bound all to his person by the cords of gratitude. Even the infidels and enemies of the faith respected, honoured, and feared Muhamad Abdallah.

But the first year of his government had not elapsed, before the Hagib Muhamad made known to the Walies of the frontiers his determination to have no more peace with the Christians, against whom he was disposed, on the contrary, to declare perpetual war, thinking of nothing less than the subjugation of all who bore the sign of the Cross within the limits of Spain.

These ideas were highly acceptable to the great body of the Moslemah; and nothing was heard but praise of the Hagib, with anticipations of his future victories.

Among the earliest cares of Muhamad Abdallah, was that of forming a treaty of peace and alliance with Balkin Ben Zeiri, lord of Zanhaga, who had made an irruption on the territory of Magreb, and was laying close siege to Medina Cebta, being anxious to avenge the death of his father Zeiri Ben Menad, who had been killed in battle by Giaffar Ben Aly, when the latter was Governor of Sale and Erab for King Alhakem Almostansir Billah. The conditions proposed by the Hagib Muhamad were laid before Balkin Ben Zeiri in that same year of 366; when, these proposals having been accepted, the African Ameer raised the siege of Cebta, and retired to his city of Tunis.

This caused the Hagib Giaffar Ben Othman, with Abu Becri El Lului and others, to murmur greatly, and not with-

out good cause, seeing that, as those who censured these proceedings justly observed, the Hagib Muhamad Abdallah was thus making peace with the most inveterate enemies of King Alhakem Almostansir, while he declared war against the sovereigns of Gallicia and Afranc, who had for so many years faithfully maintained the treaties which the late monarch had made with them.

At the same time, Giaffar Ben Aly El Andalusi, lord of Mezila, being besieged in Alcazar-Alocaub by the tribes of Barbary, wrote letters to the Hagib Muhamad Abdallah, requesting immediate assistance, and giving him to know that he should be compelled to surrender the fortress he held, if the succours required did not arrive within a period which he named. Giaffar sent these letters by his Vizier Abulwalid Ben Gehwar, who was much favoured by the Hagib Muhamad; but when the latter received them, he had already completed his conventions with the lord of Sanhaga, and did not trouble himself to consider what might be the fate of Giaffar Ben Aly; nay, the loss of Alcazar Alocaub served as a pretext for the disgrace of that Wali; and his whole family became involved in his ruin.

CHAP. XCVI.—Of the first expeditions of the Hagib Muhamad ben Abdallah ben Abi Amer, called Almanzor.

In the commencement of the year 367, the Hagib Muhamad Ben Abi Amer departed from Cordova to visit the frontiers of Eastern Spain, where he gave his orders to the Walies and Alcaides governing in those regions; these were to the effect that they should hold their forces in readiness for making two incursions in each year on the country of the Christians, taking care that their onslaughts should be effected now on one part and now on another.

From these districts the Hagib passed to Saragossa, and visited the frontier towards the mountains of Afranc, where he left similar commands with the generals of all the Capitainias. Then, taking his way by the shores of the Ebro, he came to the Comarcas bordering the frontier of the Douro; and thence, assembling the people of Merida

and Lusitania, he made an incursion upon the territories of the Gallician king. In that country he burnt many towns and villages, cut up large tracts of cultivated ground, and took much spoil, with numerous flocks and captives, without meeting resistance in any part. That done, the Hagib returned to Cordova, much pleased with his visits of inspection, and with the success of those first irruptions; yet these were in fact too suddenly made, and too entirely unforeseen by those who were the victims of the same, to permit of their making any defence, and were consequently mere acts of oppression, which cost but little blood to the wrong-doers.

Now at Ecija the Sultana Mother had commanded the construction of a vast aqueduct; and in the course of the year 367 that work was brought to a conclusion, when the following inscription, graven on stone, was affixed to the same:—

"In the name of God, the Clement, the Merciful.

"This aqueduct, hath commanded to be constructed the lady—may God increase her greatness—mother of the Prince of the Faithful, the favoured of God, Hixem, son of Alhakem, whose life may God prolong.

"And this she hath done, hoping to obtain the copious rewards of God and His great mercies.

"The work hath been performed, with the help and aid of God, by the hands of her architect and prefect of the builders the Sahib Xarta,* and of the Cadi of the towns in the Cora or Comarca of Ecija, and Carmona, Ahmed Ben Abdallah Ben Muza, Governor of the same, and of their dependencies. It was finished in the moon Rebie Postrera, of the year 367."

At the end of the same year, there debarked at Algeziras Alhadra, those troops which Balkin Ben Zeiri, Lord of Tunis, had engaged, in the conventions made with him by the Hagib Muhamad, to furnish for the wars against the Christians. Balkin had also sent back the General Giaffar Ben Aly, whom he had held captive; but that leader was immediately thrown into prison by the Hagib, who soon afterwards commanded that his head should be taken off;

* The Sahib Xarta was the Prefect of the Pretorian Guard, and Chief of the armed body maintained in all cities for the preservation of order and maintenance of the public security. In the absence of the Wali or Governor, the Sahib Xarta held command of the city.—*Conde.*

this he then despatched to his friend Balkin Ben Zeiri, as the most acceptable present that could be made him.

But that precipitate execution could not but be received by the kinsmen and partizans of Giaffar Ben Aly as the sign of a determination, on the part of the Hagib, to keep no measures with them; and from that time forward there commenced a series of rivalries and acts of vengeance between Muhamad Ben Abdallah and the family of Giaffar Ben Aly.

About this time it was that Ziad Ben Aflag, a freed man of King Abderahman Anasir, and now Sahib Almedina of Cordova, passed sentence of death, on Abdelmelic Ben Mondar, who had been convicted of very heavy crimes; but the Hagib Muhamad, being consulted respecting that sentence, before the execution thereof, exonerated the criminal in consideration of his youth, and revoked the decree of death. This was at the close of the year 367; and at the commencement of the following year Ziad Ben Aflag was himself removed from life.

In the year 368, Muhamad Ben Abdallah set forth from Cordova with the African cavalry, the cavalry of Andalusia, and the banners of Merida; all forces assembled by him for an irruption into Gallicia. There he defeated the Christians, —who had promptly advanced to resist him,—with a cruel slaughter, taking much spoil, and making captive the flower of their youth of both sexes. He then returned, as a conqueror, to Cordova, where he was received with great demonstrations of gladness. It was on this occasion that the Hagib Muhamad Ben Abdallah Ben Abi Amer El Moaferi received the name of Almanzor, which means no less than Illustrious Victor and Defender of the Mosleman People, and Protector aided of God. Yet he gave proof in time that these august titles were not unmerited.

The spoil then taken was divided by Muhamed Abdallah among the soldiers, with no other reservation than that of the fifth due to the king, and the Estafa, or right of selection among the booty, which was the privilege of the generals; by this they were empowered to make a choice among the captives, both men and women, as well as among the flocks and herds of every kind.

By Muhamad Almanzor was renewed the ancient practice

of giving a feast to the soldiers after each victory. He made visits to the encampments of all the Banderas; and such was the memory of the Hagib, that he knew all his soldiers personally; and preserving the names of those who distinguished themselves, he would invite them to his table, bestowing on them especial honours.

A peculiar custom was adopted by Muhamad Almanzor after these his first incursions on the territory of the Christians. After every battle, namely, he was wont to return to his pavilion; and having caused the dust clinging to his vestments to be gathered therefrom with much care, he laid it up in a casket, declaring that when the hour of his death had passed, he would be covered in his sepulchre with that dust. In all his expeditions he was accompanied by this casket, which he caused to be guarded with infinite jealousy, as one of his most precious possessions. Muhamad Abdallah was not without clemency for the vanquished, and would not permit that any man should wound or offer personal violence to pacific and unarmed populations.

In the same year of 368, the Hagib returned from his attack on the people dwelling beyond the eastern frontier of Spain, which had proved equally fortunate with those previously made; the liberality which Almanzor then displayed towards the commanders in those regions, the cavaliers who were about his person, his officers generally, and even the soldiers, was greater than before, and had indeed become excessive, insomuch that the Vizier whose office it was to collect the fifth due to the king, received but very little during the whole expedition, since it was from the king's portion of the spoil that the extraordinary gifts and gratifications dispensed by Mohamad Almanzor had been taken.

This fact being made known to the Hagib Abulhassan Giaffar Ben Othman, as Prefect of the Treasury, he said to his Viziers, "It appears to me that if the expeditions of the Hagib Muhamad be as glorious as his friends will have them to be, yet they are but of little utility or advantage to the state, seeing that all we obtain from the outlay we make, and the disquietudes we endure, is the loss of our soldiers and horses. Much better did our good King Alhakem understand the duties of a ruler."

Thus spake Abulhassan Ben Othman; either because he

was the enemy of the Hagib Muhamad Abdallah, or because of the rude frankness of his character, which would not suffer him to accommodate his opinions to the necessity of the times, nor to go with every wind that blew, as it is the wont of the courtier to do. But it was a perilous thing in those days to be no friend of Almanzor, or even to be lukewarm in his praise. The latter was quickly made acquainted with the words of the Hagib Abulhassan Giaffar Ben Othman; and a few hours afterwards, that minister received a mandate of arrest, was deprived of all his employments, his possessions were all confiscated, and he was himself shut up in a tower of the city wall.

At this time Maron, the son of Abderahman Ben Maron, great-grandson of the King Abderahman Anasir Ledinallah, and known as El Toleic, a youth of only sixteen years old, wounded his own father in such a manner as to cause his death; and the manner of that event was on this wise:—

The youth had from his infancy been much beloved by a child of his own age, the daughter of a slave-girl, whom his father had captured in war: but as the age of these children increased, their affection increased also, changing its character as changed the season of their lives; and when they had ceased to be infants, it was found that they could no longer live without each other. Being ignorant of this circumstance, Abderahman, the father of Maron, saw no reason for refraining from separating his son from this damsel; and when he thought the time for doing so was come, he removed her accordingly from the companionship of the young man. But that separation increased the passion of the youth, who was much distinguished for the brilliancy of his genius, as well as for considerable erudition, and was more particularly accomplished in poetry; impatient for the sight of his beloved, he succeeded in obtaining secret admission to the gardens wherein the female slaves of his father were accustomed to amuse themselves, and concealed within the shade of clustered myrtles, he waited until the damsel should pass near him.

As the night was falling, and all were about to return to the house, she did in fact draw near the place where her lover lay hid, when, softly uttering her name, he said, "There is no time for talking,—what we have to do must be done at

once; come thou with me, for without thee there is no life." Then the maiden, who desired nothing better than to please him and fulfil his commands—so great was the love that she bore him—followed him without a word, and they fled together.

But, for the misfortune of all, when they reached the outermost gate of the gardens, they met Abderahman, the father of the youth, when the latter, blinded by his passion, and not considering that it must needs be his father who was entering, since no other man could be there at that hour, drew his sword and plunged it into the body of the person opposing his flight. At the cry uttered by Abderahman, his servants hastened to the spot, and although Maron might have made his way through them alone, yet as he held the damsel, who had fainted, in his arms, and sought to bear her with him, he was disarmed and taken prisoner.

The Prefect of Justice being made acquainted with that unhappy chance, commanded that Maron should be shut up in one of the towers, and the Cadi of the Cadies, to whom the grievous misfortune, with its circumstances, was immediately communicated, having made all the needful investigations, laid the whole affair before the Sultana-mother, seeing that Maron Ben Abderahman was of the house of Omeya, and cousin to the king.

The Hagib Muhamad Almanzor being then absent on one of his expeditions, the Cadies having authorization of the Sultana-mother took cognizance of the cause, and having the youth of Maron in consideration, they sentenced him to be imprisoned one year for each of those that he had lived: thus, he was condemned to sixteen years of imprisonment, a sentence which was confirmed by the Sultana-mother and, under her direction, by the king.

But when the Hagib returned to Cordova, he explained to King Hixem that he had judged as a youth and one enamoured, rather than as the father of a family. Meanwhile, the criminal Maron remained shut up in his tower till the year 384; and during his imprisonment he wrote love-songs of great beauty, with canzonets of a melancholy character, which were likewise of extraordinary merit, and gained him much celebrity.

CHAP. XCVII.—OF OTHER INCURSIONS MADE BY THE HAGIB MUHAMAD BEN ABDALLAH BEN ABI AMER ALMANZOR ON THE TERRITORIES OF GALLICIA.

At the close of the year 368, the governor of Toledo, Abdelmelic Ben Ahmed Ben Said Ben Abu Meruan, defied Galib the Alcaide of Medina Selim to mortal combat, and in that duel Galib lost his life. He was a man of great bravery, and much esteemed by Muhamad Almanzor, who deprived Abdelmelic of his government for that defiance and its consequences, appointing in his place Abdallah Ben Abdelaziz Ben Muhamad Ben Abdelaziz Ben Omeya, called Abu Becri, a cavalier of great wealth, and much favoured by the Sultana-mother. He possessed large domains, having villages in the Land of Tadmir; nay, some have asserted that he had more than one thousand farms in those Comarcas: but he was a hard man and exceedingly avaricious, for which cause the Christians called him in their language the Dry Stone.

Now among the pages of the king was a son of the Hagib Almanzor, called Abdelmelic, who distinguished himself and was remarked above all the rest for his spirit and fine abilities: his father took him to the field in all his expeditions, proposing to accustom the youth in good time to the labours and fatigues of war; wishing him, moreover, to become acquainted with the duties of a general, and to learn all that appertained to the leading of a host: nor did Abdelmelic fail to give proof of a strong disposition to those exercises,—his valour and dexterity in the use of arms being made manifest on various occasions.

In the year 370, Almanzor was in the land of Gallicia, when there came forth to meet him a very powerful host, composed of troops supplied in part by the Christians of Gallicia, and partly by those of Castile. Many skirmishes, more or less sanguinary and obstinate, had taken place between the outposts of the two armies, when it chanced that the Hagib turned to the brave General Mushafa, and enquired of him, "How many truly valiant cavaliers dost thou account us to have in our host?" To which Mushafa replied, "Thou knowest their number well." The Hagib

Almanzor then added, "Dost thou believe them to be a thousand?" "Not so many," replied Mushafa. "Are there five hundred?" rejoined Almanzor. "Nor yet five hundred," was the answer of the general. "Dost thou count them at a hundred—or perhaps fifty," continued the Hagib. But Mushafa still replied, "Not so many." "How few, then, dost thou esteem them to be?" demanded Almanzor: and his general made answer, "I could not be certain of more than three;"—a reply by which the Hagib was much discouraged and amazed.

As this conversation concluded, there came from the camp of the Christians a cavalier mounted on a handsome horse and perfectly well armed, who asked, "Is there any one here who will come forth to fight with me?" when there instantly went forth a Mosleman cavalier; but before an hour had elapsed he lay dead at the Christian's feet.

The victor then demanded again, "Is there any other man here who will come forth to fight with me?" and another Mosleman went forth; but in less than an hour he also was slain. The Christians uttered loud cries of approval and rejoicing; but the Moslemah groaned with despite and indignation.

Again the Christian enquired for the third time, "Is there any other Mosleman who will come forth to fight with me—or any two or three of them conjoined?" whereupon a brave cavalier did present himself to the battle, but was cast from his horse by the Christian, and pierced through with the lance of the latter, so that he also died.

The Christian host did not fail to applaud with loud vociferations and much gladness; and their champion then returning to his tent, came forth again after he had changed his horse, but mounted on one equally beautiful. The housing of that second charger was the skin of a wild beast, the fore paws of the animal being brought together on the breast of the horse, and the claws of the same being gilded, so that they appeared to be of gold. But Almanzor commanded that none should go forth against him, and turning to the general Mushafa, he said, "Dost thou not see what this Christian hath been doing through the whole day?" To which Mushafa replied, "Yea, by mine eyes, I see it well, and here there is no deceit: by Allah, this

Infidel is a good cavalier, and our Moslemah have turned cowards!"

"Thou hadst spoken better, hadst thou said they are affronted and disgraced," replied Almanzor.

While they thus held discourse, there came forward the Christian champion, with his fierce battle-horse and its precious covering of the skin of the beast, saying as before, "Is there any one here who will come forth to fight with me?" whereupon the Hagib said to his general, "Now I see that what thou hast said to me is true, for of a truth we have but three brave cavaliers in all our host. If thou wilt not go forth thyself, then my son shall go, or if not, I will go, for I cannot suffer this affront that we are receiving at the hands of yonder Infidel." Whereupon Mushafa replied, "Thou shalt see that his head shall be presently laid before thee, and the bristling caparison, with its costly decorations, I will also cast at thy feet, before another hour be passed." "I hope thou wilt do so," replied Almanzor, "and I yield thee the rich skin, to the end that thou mayst henceforward appear with that ornament in the battle."*

That said, Mushafa went forth against the Christian, who enquired of him, "To what high race among the noble Moslemah dost thou belong?" Whereat Mushafa, wheeling his lance, replied, "Hedhe ginsi, Hedhe nasbi," —"This is my nobility, this my parentage."

They then fought for some time, both cavaliers maintaining the combat with much valour and dexterity, wounding each other with shrewd thrusts of the lance, wheeling their horses with admirable mastery, and each avoiding the blows of the other, while he dealt his own with a marvellous force and rapidity. Thus they continued confronting the assaults of each other with a boldness and agility that was the wonder of all: but at length the Mosleman general, less

* In the challenges to single combat, which at that time frequently preceded a battle, it was the ancient right of the general in supreme command of the Moslemah, to dispose of whatever trophies or spoils might be gained, by such champions of his host as had vanquished the enemy: these he could bestow on the conqueror, keep for himself, or add to the general mass of the booty, at his pleasure.—*Condé.*

exhausted by previous exertions than his opponent, and much younger than the Christian cavalier, wheeled his horse, with a more rapid movement, and taking his adversary thus at advantage, wounded him in the side with a mortal thrust of his lance, and the Infidel fell dead from his horse. Mushafa instantly sprang from his own and cut off the head of the foe: he then despoiled the Christian's charger of its rich covering, and returned to the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor, who embraced him and gave him that costly skin as he had promised.

The signal for combat being then given, both armies met in a sanguinary encounter, which continued until night put an end to the struggle: but that soon happened, because the day was far spent before the fight began. On the following morning the Christians showed no disposition to recommence the combat. They retired, in effect, before the light had fully appeared, and Almanzor returned to the capital in triumph.

At this time there arrived in Cordova, Abdallah Ben Ibrahim El Omeya, an African, born at Asila, but whose family belonged to Sidonia. His reputation for wisdom and learning had caused the King Alhakem Almostansir Billah to invite him to the capital; and leaving Egypt he had disembarked at Almeria immediately after the death of the king. But from that time he had wandered about in poverty and incertitude until the Hagib Muhamad Abdallah, being made acquainted with his merits and the circumstances of his case, renewed the invitation given by King Alhakem; when, soon perceiving the value of the man, he appointed him to the government of Saragossa, and made him a member of the Mexuar, or Council of State.

This Abdallah Ben Ibrahim was one of the most learned men of his age, but he was of the sect of the Iracas, and for that cause the people of Saragossa called him the Drunkard of the Ebro. They furthermore accused him of avarice, and a covetous tenacity of whatever he could make his own.

About this time the Sultana mother caused a magnificent mosque to be constructed in Cordova, which was called

Mezquita Sobeiha, from her name, but more commonly the Mosque of the Mother of Hixem. The Prefect of that work was Abdallah Ben Said Ben Muhamad Ben Batri, who was Sahib Xarta of the city. He had also been entrusted, by order of the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor, with the superintendence of the restorations then proceeding at the Grand Aljama.

In the year 371 there was an attack made on the territories of the king of Gallicia with a carefully selected body of foot and horse. In this expedition Muhamad Almanzor was accompanied by Abdallah Ben Abdelaziz, Wali of Toledo; they laid the country desolate along the whole line of their march, and coming to Medina Zamora, the Hagib laid siege to that city, which the troops finally entered sword in hand. They occupied many other strong towns also, taking possession of more than one hundred places, which they plundered of their flocks and herds, making captives large numbers of the people, young men and maidens. The Hagib Muhamad Abdallah commanded that the defences of all such towns as possessed any of great strength should be destroyed; the booty taken in this irruption was so enormous that all the soldiers, those of the provinces and frontier not excepted, had their covetousness fully satiated, and became very generous to their friends.

On his return to Cordova, the Hagib Almanzor entered the city in triumph, preceded by more than nine thousand captives, who were driven before him in troops of fifty, all bound together by one cord. The Wali Abdallah Ben Abdelaziz made a similar triumph of his entry into his city of Toledo, leading with him four thousand captives, and bringing furthermore the reputation of having cut off the heads of as many infidels during the course of that expedition.

In the autumn of the same year, Almanzor, again accompanied by Abdallah Ben Abdelaziz, returned to the land of Gallicia: they crossed the Douro, and devastated the country of the Christians without meeting any opposition, nor did the infidels then come forth to battle; but they followed the Mosleman host, observing all the movements of the troops, and occupying the heights along the line of march.

On this occasion the Moslemah were taught by experience that they ought not to despise the force of the Christians when the latter had no great numbers, seeing that if but few they were very brave, and well practised in war. The Hagib Muhamad Almanzor had divided his host into two parts, and having fixed his camp in a valley wonderfully rich in pastures, with a pleasant stream flowing through the midst of them, his advanced posts permitted their horses to disperse along the banks, and all lay carelessly reposing themselves, as if the enemy had been far distant.

But the Christians did not fail to take advantage of that opportunity, and no sooner perceived the state of the Moslemah posts from the heights where they held their watch, than they poured down like a torrent, falling upon the unprepared soldiery with infinite impetuosity and frightful vociferations. All the camp was thrown into confusion by this sudden onslaught; the more valiant rushed to their arms, but the greater mass of that multitude began to fly in disorder, without knowing whither, insomuch that one troop falling over another they rode down and destroyed their own people. The Infidels thus penetrated to the interior of the first encampment, cutting down and making their way through all that opposed them, when a terrible carnage ensued.

The fugitives from the first division soon communicated their terror to the second; but the Hagib Muhamad Almanzor, who was in his pavilion, was no sooner made acquainted with the state of things, than he got on horseback, and rushed forth with his guard of cavalry to meet the enemy, calling his brave generals by their names to join him in the defence, and all replied at once to that appeal. So effectual, indeed, was the presence of the Hagib that he soon began to rally his people; they recovered from their panic, and, although with much difficulty, at length succeeded in wresting from the Christians a victory of which they believed themselves certain.

The Hagib subsequently reproached his advanced guard for the terror they had shown and the ignominy of their flight, and so effectually did he inflame the minds of the soldiers that they desired nothing more earnestly than an

opportunity for recovering themselves in his opinion, while taking vengeance at the same time on their hated enemies. Full of that ardour, they pursued the Christians even to Medina Leyonis, where they compelled them to shut themselves up; and if the season of rains had not intervened, would doubtless have forced an entrance into that city.

Muhamad Almanzor then returned to Cordova, where he was received with much honour. But the rejoicings and festivals of victory did not cause him to forget his meditated vengeance. Giaffar Ben Othman still languished in prison, but that was not enough; and the Hagib Muhamad now sent the order for his death, which took place accordingly. It is true that some authorities declare Ben Othman to have died of grief and affliction of heart: be that as it may, he departed to the mercy of Allah at the end of the year 372.

At this time the walls and fortifications of Maqueda and Wakex were restored by order of Muhamad Almanzor, and the works were given in charge to the architect Fatho Ben Ibrahim El Omeya, known as Aben El Caxari, of Toledo. This Fatho was much renowned for his acquirements, as well as for his travels in the East: he had shortly before completed two large mosques at Toledo,—that of Gebal Berida, and that of Adabêgin.

At the close of this year the distinguished sage Chalaf Ben Meruan El Omeya El Sahari,—so called from Sahara Haiwat, a town of the Algarve of Spain,—departed from his native land with all his household, and went to establish his dwelling in the East. He was considered to be one of the most learned men that his renowned family had produced.

In the year 373 the Christians, fearing the irruptions made by the Hagib Muhamad Abdallah Ben Abi Amer Almanzor, withdrew all their riches from the cities of Astorica and Leyonis, as well as from many other towns, retiring to the mountains with their families and flocks. Nor did their fears deceive them: no sooner had the spring arrived than the Hagib sallied forth against them with the troops of Andalusia, Merida, and Toledo; all content and

joyous at the prospect of plunder before them, and feeling the utmost confidence in the good fortune of their generals.

Arrived at the frontier, Muhamad Almanzor passed his forces in review, and having made such division of the host as he thought good, proceeded to besiege the city of Leyonis. This place was a very strong one, surrounded by lofty walls, amply furnished with towers: it had gates of bronze, of which each was a fortress in itself. The Hagib pressed the siege very closely, and during five days many obstinate combats were fought beneath the walls, which he caused to be assailed with engines of war, and machines of wonderful construction.

At the end of that time the massive gates were forced, and breaches were effected on several parts of the walls. During three days longer a false attack was made on the southern part of the town, the true assault being made on the western side, where Abdallah Almanzor himself, rendered impatient and wearied with the length of the resistance offered by those valiant infidels, was the first to enter the place. With a banner in one hand and his sword in the other he pressed forward, cutting down all that opposed his progress. He slew the brave Alcaide of the Christians with his own hand; and all the followers of that unfortunate chief, following the example he had given them, died fighting where they stood.

It was not until the close of evening that the Moslemah obtained full possession of the city, and even then they were compelled to remain under arms and keep watch through the night. On the following day the place was sacked: when the Christians remaining alive, and who still persisted in defending themselves, were put to the sword; all beside, with the women and children, were made captive.

Almanzor then destroyed the walls of the city; but not desiring to make any longer stay, he could not complete the demolition of the towers, which were strong to a marvel: these, therefore, remained, not indeed erect, yet still but half thrown down.

A similar fate befel the city of Astorica. The defence made was obstinate, but the defenders laboured in vain,

seeing that God had resolved to destroy their strong walls and the vast thickness of those great towers in which they had put their trust. On his return, Almanzor demolished the city of Sedmanca likewise, and content with these advantages he then returned to Cordova, being received with acclamations of triumph in all the cities through which he passed.

END OF VOL. I.

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